
Safeguarding Policy for Economics for the Environment Consultancy Ltd

1.1 Our commitment to safeguarding

Although our organisation does not come into regular contact with children or vulnerable adults, we are committed to clearly stating our policies and procedures in respect of safeguarding individuals. All eftec employees, and those working on our behalf, need to be informed enough to ensure that complaints and concerns about individuals at risk are properly identified and acted upon.

eftec aims to protect all of its staff, interns, volunteers, associates, subcontractors, those who receive services from eftec, and those who come on to eftec's premises ("Beneficiaries") from any act or behaviour of any member of staff or volunteer which, whether deliberately or unknowingly on the part of that member of staff or volunteer, gives rise to harm or ill treatment. Such harm or ill treatment includes abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, discriminatory, institutional or organisational, financial or material), neglect, or impairment of the health or development of eftec's Beneficiaries.

eftec will ensure that this its safeguarding policy is implemented by all within eftec and, for that purpose, it will ensure that its staff, interns and volunteers have read and understood it.

Where applicable, eftec will work in partnership with local / national agencies to put in place appropriate procedures for reporting, making referrals, and accessing training and specialist support, as and when required.

1.2 Safe recruitment

To aim to protect its Beneficiaries, eftec will seek to recruit staff and volunteers using appropriate procedures, safeguards and checks. Where applicable, eftec will take up at least two references for all staff posts and volunteer roles prior to appointment. eftec will provide an induction programme for all new volunteers and staff, and appropriate training and ongoing/refresher training for them at regular intervals, to enable all volunteers and staff to undertake their roles safely, effectively and confidently. The induction will make it clear to them that they have an obligation to implement this Policy and to learn about protection issues and their related responsibilities.

Where eftec should do so, it will use the Disclosure & Barring Service ("DBS") checks to help it to assess suitability of a candidate for a particular volunteer or staff role which is treated by the DBS as Regulated Activity and is therefore subject to a barring list check. In relation to a post or role which is eligible for an enhanced DBS check, where it considers it appropriate it will carry out an enhanced DBS check. eftec will assess any criminal record information that is disclosed in line with its data protection and equalities (treating ex-offenders fairly) policies.

eftec will regularly review its recruitment and other human resources procedures in response to changes in legislation and systems external to eftec (e.g. DBS and barring list checks).

1.3 Volunteers

eftec does not currently engage volunteers – nor has it done so in the past. If it were to do so, all volunteer roles would be supported by a Director. Volunteers would be treated equally alongside paid staff, and all volunteers would be offered the same opportunities for advancement, responsibility, training and gaining qualifications, and acknowledgement for their contribution to eftec.

In turn, volunteers would be required to adhere to the applicable parts of [eftec's Code of Conduct](#) at all times as a representative of eftec. Before they take up their role, they will each be given a clear description of the requirements and responsibilities of their role and the member of staff or trustee recruiting them will discuss their role with them, to ensure that they understand what is expected of them. Any volunteer roles would be appropriately supervised in accordance with statutory guidance.

1.4 Safeguarding officer / responsible person

eftec is not required to elect a Safeguarding Officer; however, our Chief Executive Officer, Ece Ozdemiroglu, will act as the "Responsible Person" with overall responsibility for matters relating to safeguarding.

Ms Ozdemiroglu will be available to all staff, volunteers and Beneficiaries to speak to when they have any concerns, issues, or complaints regarding the safety, well-being or conduct of Beneficiaries, volunteers or staff. Ms Ozdemiroglu will liaise with appropriate local and national agencies, contribute to appropriate policies, maintain records, keep confidentiality, adhere to and promote this Policy within eftec, and support or provide access to support for individuals suffering harm or abuse.

1.5 Awareness of harm and abuse within eftec

All incidents of harm to any Beneficiary will require an appropriate response to reduce risks and improve eftec's services and activities. Harm is caused by accidents, deliberate abuse (physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, financial), neglect (deliberate or not) or factors such as bullying, prejudicial attitudes, or a failure to enable a person to participate in activities that are open to most of their peers. It can also include abuse via use of ICT facilities (e.g. grooming, bullying via the internet).

Deliberate acts of harm (physical, psychological, sexual, emotional and financial) and neglect are abuses against the person. Those acts will incur disciplinary proceedings and require reports and referrals to social services, the police, other professional bodies, and the DBS if the act is by someone in Regulated Activity. If a criminal offence is thought to have been committed by any staff member or volunteer, the police will be informed.

1.6 Confidentiality

All reports and logs (including personnel records) will be kept securely and confidentially according to eftec's data protection policies or in line with the DBS Code of Practice for Registered Bodies if appropriate, until or unless it is necessary to share this material with the agencies named above. Information will be shared by eftec on a "need-to-know" basis only.

1.7 Reports of possible or actual harm

eftec supports and encourages all Beneficiaries to promptly speak up and contact the “Responsible Person” where there is a concern (i.e. a worry, issue or doubt about practice or about treatment of a Beneficiary or colleague, or their circumstances), or a disclosure (i.e. information about a person at risk of or suffering from Significant Harm) or an allegation of an incident or a possibility that a volunteer or staff member has caused harm or could cause harm to a person in their care.

Staff or volunteers can report, and have a responsibility to report, something that they become aware of if they suspect or discover that it is not right or is illegal or if it appears to them that someone at work is neglecting their duties, putting someone’s health and safety in danger or covering up wrongdoing. They may become aware of any of these things from what they see or hear or from something another person has disclosed to them.

In the first instance, the staff or volunteer making a report should speak to their line manager¹ who will then liaise with the Responsible Person or eftec’s Board of Directors, all of whom have appropriate responsibility. However, if the report implicates their line manager, the staff member or volunteer making the report should instead speak directly to the Responsible Person or the Board.

eftec prefers that an individual should use internal processes whenever possible to make a report as above, but this does not prevent them from making a report or referral, in their own right as a private individual, to statutory agencies such as social services or the police.

Where there is risk of harm to any Beneficiary, the Responsible Person has the power to act as necessary and, in particular, as follows:

- Log all conversations regarding the issue;
- sign and request signatures on reports and statements;
- Confidentially seek advice from expert sources;
- Share concerns (with consent where required and appropriate) internally with senior staff; and
- Share concerns and make referrals to external agencies such as social services or the police, as appropriate to the circumstances.

eftec cannot promise confidentiality to staff or volunteers making an internal report where it has to be shared with any statutory agencies.

eftec also supports its staff or volunteers to raise concerns or to disclose information, which they believe shows malpractice - whistleblowing (disclosure in the public interest).

1.8 Working overseas

eftec and its staff understand that they need to:

- Be aware of different risks for staff, volunteers and beneficiaries who are working overseas;

¹ In eftec, line manager would be the Senior Consultant, Principal Consultant or Director for whom the individual works most often in a given time. If that matter related to a specific project, it should be reported to the Project Manager and/or Project Director

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- Have suitable reporting and monitoring processes in place for any work conducted overseas;
 - Monitor where they work for any changes or new safety systems which are needed.

They understand that working overseas include challenges such as:

- Different cultures, practices or legal systems;
- An unstable environment, like a conflict zone;
- Working with many partners.

eftec is committed to applying the same practices as in England and Wales and making sure they comply with any extra requirements of the other country. They understand:

- When to report issues to law enforcement in the country they are working in;
- They also need to report to police in the UK.

1.9 Implementation of policy

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the Board. It is deemed effective as of the date of issue and has been approved & authorised by:

Name:	Allan Provins
Position:	Director
Date:	November 2022
Signature:	

Next Review Date: **November 2023**

Appendix A - Recruitment and selection

The need for recruitment is assessed regularly by comparing our current portfolio of projects, projects in the pipeline, and changes in the market and our chances to respond to those changes through our current team. Where gaps are identified, we qualify the gaps in terms of level of seniority and experience in different economic analysis tools, economic sectors / environmental media and eftec's service areas. Once the need is established, we follow the steps below.

A.1.1 Job descriptions and person specifications

We set out our needs in a written position contract for each grade. The following aspects are covered:

- Overall title and aim of the job;
- Tasks for the position; and
- Skills and knowledge and experience which a person will need to have, or be able to acquire, in order to do the job well.

The position contracts are clearly written and avoid subjective or irrelevant criteria and are signed by each employee as an addendum to their legal employment contract.

A.1.2 Advertising

The purpose of advertising is to bring the opportunities we have to the attention of the widest pool of appropriate applicants. To ensure that we reach all potential candidates, we combine several methods of advertising such as:

- Job centre services which are free to all local job seekers and take account of local employers' needs;
- Commercial employment agencies that do not require subscription;
- Our own company website;
- UKNEE website (a website for the UK Network of Environmental Economists);
- Relevant networks/newsletters;
- Linked In, and
- Paid-for recruitment agencies for senior roles.

Wherever we decide to advertise a vacancy, our method of advertising relates directly to the skills and experience needed to do the job. We:

- Draw on the job description and person specification to ensure that we give a realistic picture of the job and are precise about our requirements;
- Think carefully about the language we use;
- State that we welcome applications from all sections of the community;
- Give clear instructions about obtaining the application form and job information; and
- Are prepared to talk informally about the job and our expectations if, for example, a candidate is visually impaired.

A.1.3 Application information

Applicants are only asked to provide the information we require in order to successfully carry out our evaluation and shortlisting process – i.e. to determine if an applicant has the skills to match the job description/ positional contract. In particular:

- We ask only for the bare minimum of personal details. Full name and contact details are usually sufficient;
- Where applicable, a sample of the applicant's writing is requested;
- We invite candidates to draw from experience gained outside employment where this shows that they have skills needed for the job, for example skills gained in voluntary work or during a career break;
- If a candidate has a disability, we may need to consider making special arrangements for the interview. However, we keep the disability question as simple as possible;
- We try to ensure that the information we request relates directly to the job and our requirements; and
- We note on the job advertisement that applicants need to have the right to work in the UK.

At this stage, we consider how to deal with applications from people with disabilities. In line with the Disability Discrimination Act, some candidates may need to apply by – for example - telephone, audio or video recording.

A.1.4 Shortlisting

To form a shortlist of applicants for a role, we match evidence from their application against the requirements set out in our specification. Best practice points are:

- Having more than one person carrying out the review, to reduce the risk of prejudice or bias;
- Adopting a simple marking system to show how far each candidate has presented evidence that they can meet our requirements;
- Taking each application in turn and working systematically through our requirements, in order of importance, awarding a mark for each;
- Carrying out a brief review at the end of the exercise, making sure that marks have been awarded on the basis of evidence provided on the application, rather than – for example - personal or second-hand knowledge about the candidate; and
- Inviting the candidates with the best total scores to interview.

In particular, we:

- Recognise that skills and abilities can be demonstrated by experience gained outside the workplace;
- Count only evidence which is directly relevant to the job. We rely on the criteria identified in the job specification; and
- Consider whether adjustments could be made to enable disabled candidates to meet our requirements.

A.1.5 Interviewing

We recognise that, ideally, interviews should be carried out by more than one person. As an SME, this is not always possible, but we try to find alternatives such as telephone or web-conference interviews. The position contract and our analysis of the application information submitted to us provide a useful framework for the interview:

For example:

- It is quite reasonable that we should want to talk about particular points with different candidates and ask questions in various ways having considered the evidence in their application; however, we ensure that we cover the same topics and issues in the same depth with each of the candidates;
- Evidence about a candidate's experience outside the workplace can be helpful provided that it relates to the job. It often helps to encourage candidates to give a wide range of examples, which show how they can meet our requirements. We are careful, though, not to stray into a candidate's personal circumstances; and
- Ask about a disability if it is, or may be, relevant to the candidate's ability to do the job. Talking about the effects of a disability will help us to consider whether there are reasonable adjustments which might be made to help we get the best person for the job.

A.1.6 Making our decision

In making our decision, we also consider the following:

- References - we reserve the right to call in references at any stage of the recruitment process. Depending on the nature of the role, we may ask for a general character reference from a referee, or we may provide the referee with a copy of the job description / positional contract and ask for evidence of the candidate's ability to meet our specific requirements.
- Eligibility - before appointing a person to the job, we check their eligibility to work in this country. Our Internal Immigration Policy sets out the procedures for Right to Work checks. We do not make assumptions about candidates. We ask all applicants about their eligibility.

We explain why we are required to ask for this information and make it clear that it is our policy to ask all successful candidates for this information.

A.1.7 Unsuccessful applicants

Where possible, we inform all candidates of the result of their application. Where we expect a high number of applications, we note on the advertisement that we will only respond to short-listed applicants. We provide feedback to interviewed candidates about their application and performance at interview if they request it.