




Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy Details

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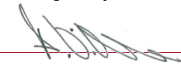
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 Taaleem Holdings P.J.S.C. (“Taaleem” or “the Company”) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people within its care.
- 1.2 This policy extends the *Recruitment and Onboarding Policy (HR-008)* and outlines Taaleem’s safer recruitment framework to ensure that only individuals suitable to work with children are employed.
- 1.3 All recruitment practices must follow the procedures in this policy to rigorously assess candidate suitability and prevent the engagement of anyone who could pose a risk to children.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees listed below excluding contractors (who are covered under separate vendor compliance procedures).

This policy applies to:

- All Taaleem permanent and temporary employees
- All external supply staff
- Independent Learning Support Assistants (ILSAs)

Regardless of employment method, the same safeguarding, vetting, and background checks apply to all individuals before any work with students begins. Documentation for ILSAs may be managed through the Education department, but final verification rests with School HR (HR Advisor).

- 2.2 The policy is guided by:
 - UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on Child Rights (Wadeema’s Law)
 - Ministry of Education (MoE) and KHDA/ADEK safeguarding and licensing standards
 - All other relevant local laws and regulations and International best practices in child protection and safer recruitment

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 School HR/ HR Advisor

- Verify that all safer recruitment documentation is complete before the candidate starts.
- Complete an appropriate Risk Assessment in consultation with the HR Cluster Manager and school Principal.
- Maintain accurate records on the Single Central Record (SCR).
- In cases of ambiguity or safeguarding-related concerns arising during the safer recruitment process, the HR Advisor may escalate the matter to the Cluster HR Manager, school Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and / or Central Office Safeguard Lead for guidance and advice.

3.2 School Principal

- Ensure consistent implementation of this policy.
- Confirm that all staff involved in recruitment understand and apply safer recruitment requirements.

3.3 Cluster HR Manager

- Addressing escalations raised by the schools.
- Ensuring compliance across all recruitment and onboarding activities including this policy.
- The Cluster HR Manager may liaise with the Central Office Safeguarding Lead and/or the HR Director and proactively seek guidance where uncertainties arise in relation to safer recruitment.

4. Safer Recruitment Training

- 4.1 All employees participating in interviews must complete recognised safer recruitment training. If this is not feasible, at least one trained panel member must be present in every interview.
- 4.2 Training must be completed and renewed annually. It may be undertaken through National College via BlueSky, TES, NSPCC, or face-to-face training, depending on each school's operational arrangements.
- 4.3 HR Advisor must ensure all relevant staff complete training within three months of appointment or promotion.
- 4.4 Line Managers are responsible for ensuring enrolment and completion. HR must update both the SCR and the employee file once training is verified.
- 4.5 All HR Advisors across the group will receive annual face to face safer recruitment training every 2 years.

5. Interview Panel Requirements

- 5.1 Interview panels must evaluate each applicant's suitability to work with children and explore any employment gaps or anomalies.
- 5.2 The standard interview feedback form on the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) must be completed before issuing a Letter of Intent (LOI).
- 5.3 All interviews must include at least two interviewers. Interviews may occur in one or two stages depending on the role.

6. Advertising and Job Descriptions

- 6.1 Every job advertisement and job description must include the following safeguarding statement:

“Taaleem is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We expect all staff to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be required to undergo relevant background checks, including references, verification of qualifications and identity, teaching regulatory authority checks and police checks (including overseas checks where applicable).”

The following statement is also on Talentera as part of the candidate application process:

“As part of our safer recruitment process, and in line with regulatory requirements, the school will carry out online and social media searches using publicly available information. By submitting this application, you acknowledge that these checks form part of the recruitment process.”

7. Risk Assessment Form

- 7.1 A Risk Assessment Form must be completed whenever standard safer recruitment procedures cannot be fully applied.
- 7.2 The form must document the reasons for deviation, actions taken, and approvals obtained.
- 7.3 It must be signed by the HR Advisor, the Principal and the Cluster HR Manager, and stored on the employee file.

Examples requiring a Risk Assessment Form (the list is not exhaustive but an indicative guide of the type of situations that may require a Risk Assessment Form)

- Dual national missing a passport for one nationality
- Teaching Assistant reference provided from a personal email due to prior informal employment
- Reference unavailable because a former school has closed or for another reason
- Candidate holding a Golden Visa
- Unsatisfactory reference where the Principal decides to proceed after due diligence
- KHDA / ADEK system limitations (e.g., multiple subject appointments not permitted)

Refer to section 7.9 below for guidance on the classification of risks as temporary or permanent and the associated escalation and review protocols.

Reference-related cases

- 7.4 Where a reference cannot be obtained from a verified source, written justification must be provided by the candidate and recorded on a signed Risk Assessment Form.
- 7.5 For candidates such as Individual Learning Support Assistants (ILSAs) who worked privately for families, a copy of the sponsor's personal ID (e.g., passport) must accompany the reference. Five years of employment history must still be covered.
- 7.6 If a candidate has limited work experience and only one previous employer, a second reference must be obtained from an educational institution in which the candidate was enrolled within the last five years. Where a second employment reference cannot be provided and an educational reference is used instead, a Risk Assessment Form must be completed and signed by HR and the School Principal and retained on the employee's file.
- 7.7 If a Line Manager wishes to proceed after receiving an unsatisfactory reference, HR must escalate the matter to the Safer Recruitment Panel, follow up with the referee for clarification, and complete a Risk Assessment Form.

KHDA-related cases

- 7.8 If the required designation is unavailable on the KHDA portal or a teacher teaches multiple subjects, HR must complete a Risk Assessment Form, signed by HR, DSL and the Principal.

Golden Visa holders

Due to Taaleem's immigration status and the limitations of the company's establishment card, Taaleem **cannot obtain or process work permits** for individuals holding Golden Visas, nor can it employ anyone sponsored under a Golden Visa or holding a resident visa issued in another Emirate (with the sole exception of spouse-sponsored visas issued within the same Emirate). These restrictions are regulatory and procedural in nature—Taaleem is simply unable to generate the required work permit under these visa types. In all such instances, a Risk Assessment Form must be completed to assess compliance implications. For any scenarios falling outside these parameters, HR Advisor must consult the HR Director via the HR Cluster Managers before progressing further.

7.9 Review of Risk Assessment

As part of the safer recruitment process, any risks identified through background checks, references, disclosures, or due diligence must be assessed and classified as either **temporary or permanent** at the point of completing the Risk Assessment Form.

Temporary risks are time-bound and capable of resolution through further verification, documentation, or mitigation measures (e.g. outstanding or delayed references, pending background checks etc). Where a temporary risk is identified, the Risk Assessment Form must be reviewed by the HR Advisor, Principal, and Cluster HR Manager prior to confirmation of the employee, and evidence of resolution must be documented.

Permanent risks are risks that cannot be mitigated or resolved within a defined timeframe and may present an ongoing safeguarding concern. Where a permanent risk is identified (e.g. adverse findings in background checks, negative references etc.), guidance will be sought from the school Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Central Office Safeguard Lead (CO escalation is dependent on the context of the risk and at the discretion of the school) to determine the appropriate course of action.

All risk classifications, decisions, and reviews must be clearly documented and retained by the school.

8. Gaps in Employment

- 8.1 References must cover five full years of employment history, excluding any gaps.
- 8.2 Candidates must declare employment gaps on the ATS application. Interviewers must explore these during the interview and record the explanation in the feedback form.
- 8.3 If not covered during the interview, HR must obtain written justification and record it in the ATS "Additional Notes" field before progressing with the candidate.

9. Pre-Employment Checks

All of the following checks must be completed before employment commences. For ILSAs, the relevant pre-employment checks and compliance requirements are outlined separately in the *ILSA Policy*; HR Advisor must ensure these are completed and verified in line with that policy.

Requirement	Key Standard
Curriculum Vitae	Updated, detailed with exact employment dates and explanations for any gaps.
Application Form	Completed in full through ATS or HR form, including safeguarding declarations.
Professional Credentials	Verified qualifications or registrations (e.g., QTS, DHA licence).
Education Certificates	Fully attested by home-country authorities, UAE Consulate, and MoFA (UAE).
Identification	Valid passport(s); all nationalities must be declared and copied.
References	<p>A minimum of two written references must be obtained, covering at least the last five years of employment, with additional references requested where required to achieve full chronological coverage.</p> <p>References must verify employment role and dates, conduct, attendance, any disciplinary history, and the individual's suitability to work with children. For academic staff, at least one reference must be from the current or most recent Principal; for non-academic staff, from the current or most recent Line Manager. In line with Department for Education (DfE) safer recruitment</p>

	guidance – and recognising that inspections can be failed on safeguarding grounds if verbal verification is not undertaken – Taaleem requires a telephone reference to be completed for at least one referee. The purpose of the call is to authenticate the reference, clarify any ambiguities, and confirm the accuracy of the information provided, with a brief written record of the conversation retained on file. This standard reflects Taaleem’s commitment to maintaining robust safeguarding practices.
Criminal Background Checks	Must cover the past five years, dated within three months of joining. Acceptable examples include: UK – Enhanced DBS or ACRO ICPC; USA – FBI; Ireland – GARDA; UAE – Police clearance from Emirate of residence.
Employment Documents	LOI and contract initialled on all pages, signed, and dated by both parties.
Codes of Conduct	KHDA/ADEK and Taaleem Codes of Conduct signed before start date.
Regulatory Appointment Letter	Must match the role title and subject taught. Examples: Class Teacher, Subject Teacher – Arabic A/B, Special Needs Teacher, Head of Department + Subject. Any exceptions require a Risk Assessment Form.
Social Media	<p>Social media and online presence checks will be applied consistently and proportionately for all relevant roles as part of the safer recruitment process. Checks will be limited strictly to publicly available information and conducted across the following platforms only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn • Facebook • Instagram • X (formerly Twitter) • TikTok • Public blogs or forums that are clearly attributable to the candidate <p>These checks will be undertaken by HR Advisors, post-offer, and prior to confirmation of appointment.</p> <p>Recording and Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The date of the check and a brief outcome (for example, “Clear – no concerns identified”) will be recorded by the HR Advisor. • Where no concerns are identified, no screenshots or additional records will be retained. • Where a potential concern is identified, this will be documented appropriately on the SCR and escalated in line with the safeguarding procedures.

10. Letter of Intent

An LOI may only be issued once the following are obtained:

- CV

- Completed Application Form
- Interview Feedback Form

11. Start of Employment

Before joining, HR must ensure the following are on file:

- CV and Application Form
- Interview Feedback Form
- Signed Codes of Conduct (Taaleem & KHDA/ADEK)
- Signed LOI and Employment Contract
- Attested academic certificates and transcripts
- Minimum two references covering the past five years
- Experience letters (if applicable)
- Regulatory Appointment Letter
- Police clearance
- Valid personal identification documents
- No employee may start work until this documentation is complete.

12. Record-Keeping and Single Central Record (SCR)

- 12.1 HR Advisor must maintain a SCR for all Taaleem employees. Third-party suppliers and ILSAs are excluded from the school SCR, as their compliance records are maintained separately by the relevant department(s). However, the same safeguarding and background-check standards apply to all individuals working with students, regardless of employment status.
- 12.2 The SCR template is standardised across Taaleem and must be completed in full for each school.
- 12.3 Soft-copy employee files must be retained for a minimum of five years after employment ends. Safeguarding records relating to allegations against individual employees are excluded from this process and must be maintained separately for a time period in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 13.4 Third-party supplier documentation is maintained by the Operations team, and ILSA records by the Inclusion team.

13. Allegations and Related Policies

Any allegation or concern relating to staff conduct or safeguarding must be addressed under the relevant policy:

- *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*
- *Disciplinary Policy*

- *Grievance Policy*
- *Whistleblowing Policy*

14. Templates

Standard reference check templates will be provided to all schools and stakeholders as part of the Safer Recruitment pack. These will also be available with CO HR and stored within the CO Policy Repository, where the most up-to-date versions of all policies and supporting templates can be accessed.

15. Implementation Timeline

This Safer Recruitment Policy applies to all new appointments from October 2024 (when the first version of this policy was released).

For appointments made prior to the Academic Year 2024–2025, employee files will be reviewed at the point of contract renewal. Where gaps are identified, Risk Assessment Forms will be completed and documented in accordance with this Policy.

Management will aim to complete and close out the forms within two months of the contract renewal date. Any delays due to extenuating circumstances must be approved by the HR Director.

16. Non-Compliance

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

Version Control

Version No.	Date	Details of Changes
1	Oct 2024	New Policy
2	Mar 2026	General refresh and update

Disclaimer:

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Appendix 1 – HR Risk Assessment Form

Taaleem HR Risk Assessment Form

Background Information			
Business Unit		Date	
Type of Risk		Name of person completing this form	
Longevity of Risk	Permanent / Temporary	Specify the timeframe of Temporary Risk:	e.g. 2 month / 6 months

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

Signed By	Signed By	Signed By
HR Advisor	Principal	Designated Safeguard Lead
Date:	Date:	Date: