



East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

## References Policy



## Document Version Control

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<b>Type of document</b>	Policy
<b>Version Number</b>	1.0
<b>Document File Name</b>	
<b>Issue date</b>	
<b>Approval date and by who (SMT / committee)</b>	
<b>Document held by (name/section)</b>	Human Resources
<b>For internal publication only or external also?</b>	Internal only
<b>Document stored on Council website or Eunice?</b>	Eunice
<b>Next review date</b>	

## Change History

Issue	Date	Comments
0.1	12/01/12	
1.0	07/03/12	

*NB: Draft versions 0.1 - final published versions 1.0*

## Consultees

Internal	External
e.g. Individual(s) / Group / Section	e.g. Stakeholders / Partners /Organisation(s)
Jo Minney (HR Advisor), Katy Everitt (Head of ROD)	
CMT	
UNISON	
X-change	

## Distribution List

Internal	External
e.g. Individual(s) / Group / Section	e.g. Stakeholders / Partners /Organisation(s)

## Links to other documents

Document	Link
Recruitment policy (this policy will be incorporated into the recruitment policy when it is reviewed)	

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## 1.0 Scope

1.1 This policy applies to all employees and members.

## 2.0 Policy outcomes

2.1 The outcomes to be delivered by this policy are:

Reference policy outcomes	Links to corporate outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legal, fair and helpful references for staff.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective management</li><li>• Legal compliance</li></ul>

## 3.0 Introduction

3.1 The council will provide references for current or ex staff when requested.

3.2 Each reference should ensure that it:

- a) Is honest, truthful and not misleading.
- b) Assists staff in obtaining new opportunities or applying for mortgages/leases.
- c) Makes potential new employers aware of any serious matters.

3.3 The council has a legal responsibility to disclose certain serious matters when requested to give a reference. This situation is likely to happen very rarely. It would apply, for example, if we received a reference request for an ex member of staff who had been dismissed. In this situation we would have an obligation to disclose the dismissal.

## 4.0 Writing a reference

4.1 Managers are in the best position to write employment references as they will know the individual best.

4.2 Employment references should therefore be written by the line manager of the member of staff the reference refers to.

4.3 HR will provide advice and support to line managers writing references.

4.4 A member of the HR team will provide any details required, such as employment dates, on request.

4.5 If a reference is required for a mortgage, rental agreement or similar, HR will write the reference.

4.6 Personal references may be provided by staff and/or members. They must not be on Council headed paper and should clearly state that they are personal references.

## 5.0 Authorisation and filing of references.

- 5.1 A draft of an employment reference must be sent to HR for authorisation before it is sent to the requesting organisation.
- 5.2 During exit interviews staff should be asked if they wish references to be provided once they have left the council. This information should be recorded on the exit interview form.
- 5.3 If a reference is received for a current member of staff, written confirmation should be received from them to confirm that they are happy for personal information about them to be provided to a third party. The confirmation can be by email.
- 5.4 HR will then file a copy of the final reference on the member of staff's employment file.

## 6.0 Access to references

- 6.1 Current and former staff have a right to request to see a copy of any reference written about them. Applications should be made to HR.

## EIA Initial Screening Form – policy

<b>1. Name of Policy:</b>	Reference Policy
<b>2. Name and Job title / role of person completing Initial Screening:</b>	Aime Armstrong - Human Resources Manager
<b>3. What is the main purpose of the Policy?</b>	To provide guidance to staff, managers and members on providing references.
<b>4. Who is the Policy aimed at?</b>	Staff and members.
<b>5. How is the success of the Policy measured?</b>	Low level of complaints from staff and zero employment tribunals.
<b>6. Are equality monitoring systems for the Policy in place?</b>	No. <i>(If yes give details)</i>

**7. Use the following table to indicate using a ✓:**

- a) Where you think that the Policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality of opportunity or improving relations within equality groups.
- b) Where you think that the Policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality groups i.e. it could disadvantage them.
- c) Where you think that the Policy could have a neutral impact on any of the equality group i.e. no impact

Equality Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Reason
<b>Gender:</b>				
Women/Girls			✓	
Men/Boys			✓	
Transgender people			✓	
<b>Sexual Orientation:</b>				
Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals			✓	
<b>Race/Ethnicity:</b>				
White British people			✓	
White non-British people (including Irish people)			✓	
Asian or Asian British people			✓	
Black or Black British people			✓	
People of mixed heritage			✓	
Chinese people			✓	
Travellers (Gypsy/Roma/Irish heritage)			✓	
People from other ethnic groups			✓	
People who do not have English as their first language			✓	
<b>Disability:</b>				
Physical impairment, e.g mobility issues which mean using a wheelchair or crutches.			✓	

Equality Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Reason
Sensory impairment, e.g. blind/having a serious visual impairment, deaf/having a serious hearing impairment.			✓	
Mental health condition, e.g. depression or schizophrenia			✓	
Learning disability/difficulty, e.g. Down's syndrome or dyslexia, or cognitive impairment such as autistic spectrum disorder			✓	
Long-standing illness or health condition, e.g. cancer, HIV. Diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy			✓	
Other health problems or impairments ( <i>please specify if appropriate</i> )			✓	
<b>Age:</b>				
Older People (60+)			✓	
Children and Young People (see guidance for definition)			✓	
<b>Religion/Belief:</b>				
Christian			✓	
Buddhist			✓	
Hindu			✓	
Jewish			✓	
Muslim			✓	
Sikh			✓	
Other religion (including holding no belief)			✓	
<b>Other Potentially Affected Groups</b>				
Rural Isolation - People who live in rural areas e.g. isolated geographically, lack of internet access			✓	



Equality Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Reason
Socio-economic Exclusion – e.g. people who are on benefits, have low educational attainment, single parents, people living in poor quality housing, people who have poor access to services, the unemployed or any combination of these and the other protected strands			✓	
Any other potentially affected groups ( <i>please specify</i> )			✓	
<b>8. If you have indicated that there is a negative impact on any group:</b>				
a) Is that impact against legislation?	Yes	No		
b) What is the level of impact?	High	Low		
9. Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance?	How?			
10. Could you improve a positive impact of the Policy?	How?			
11. If there is no evidence that the Policy promotes equality of opportunity or improved relations, could it be adapted so that it does?	How?			
Head of Service signature				
<b>Date of Initial Screening:</b>	03 February 2012			

## NOTE

If a negative impact has been highlighted and it is possibly discriminatory and not intended and/or of high impact you must complete a Full EIA.

If not, you should still consider if completing a Full EIA would be helpful in making a thorough assessment.