



ELEVATE BEYOND LIMITED

Safer Recruitment Policy

Supporting Every Step Forward

POLICY INFORMATION	
Date Issued	June 2026
Next Review	September 2026 (and annually thereafter, aligned to KCSiE update)
Policy Owner	Sulayman Cham — Founder and Director
Trained in Safer Recruitment	Yes — High Speed Training, City & Guilds Assured (June 2026, Cert: T-5007908-5941990)
Trained as DSL	Yes — DSL Level 3, High Speed Training, City & Guilds Assured (June 2026, Cert: T-5007908-5941989)
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This policy should be read alongside: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, GDPR and Data Protection Policy, and Candidate Code of Conduct.

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1. About This Policy

This document sets out how Elevate Beyond Limited approaches the recruitment and vetting of every candidate it registers, from the point of initial enquiry through to placement and beyond. It applies to all candidates who seek registration with the agency, regardless of the role they are applying for, the setting they will work in or the duration of the placement.

Every placement Elevate Beyond makes involves regulated activity with children. That single fact means there are no exceptions to the process set out in this policy. No candidate will be presented to any client school, provision or local authority commissioner until every step in the vetting process has been completed and recorded.

This policy is reviewed annually, aligned to the September update of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Any change to the statutory framework that affects our vetting obligations will be reflected in an immediate update to this policy and communicated to all candidates registered at that time.

2. Why Safer Recruitment Matters to Elevate Beyond

Elevate Beyond Limited was founded by a qualified Social Worker with nearly a decade of frontline statutory experience across Manchester and Salford. That background includes child protection, EHCP assessments, multi-agency safeguarding work and direct professional relationships with some of the most vulnerable young people in Greater Manchester.

The young people in SEMH and Alternative Provision settings are not an abstract concept for this organisation, they are the young people our founder has worked alongside, advocated for and in some cases helped to keep safe. The professionals we place work with those same young people every day. The rigour of our vetting process is a direct expression of how seriously we take that responsibility.

Safer recruitment is not a compliance exercise at Elevate Beyond. It is the mechanism through which we make sure that the professionals entering SEMH and AP settings through our agency are who they say they are, have the background they claim and do not pose a risk to the young people they will work with. Every step in our seven-step process exists for a specific reason and no step will be skipped or shortened to meet a deadline or fill an urgent vacancy.

3. The Founder's Qualifications and Training

Safer recruitment decisions at Elevate Beyond are made by Sulayman Cham, who holds the following relevant qualifications and certifications:

Sulayman Cham — Founder and Director

Qualified Social Worker | Social Work England Registered

BSc (Hons) Social Work — University of Bedfordshire

Nearly a decade of statutory experience across Manchester and Salford City Councils

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Level 3) — High Speed Training, City & Guilds Assured
Issued June 2026 | Certificate: T-5007908-5941989 | Renewal: June 2028

Safer Recruitment in Education — High Speed Training, City & Guilds Assured
Issued June 2026 | Certificate: T-5007908-5941990 | Renewal: June 2028

All recruitment decisions made by Elevate Beyond are made by a person who has completed accredited Safer Recruitment in Education training. As the organisation grows and additional staff are brought into the recruitment process, they will be required to complete the same training before making any vetting or placement decision.

4. Legislation and Statutory Framework

This policy is grounded in the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSiE) which is the primary statutory framework governing all aspects of our safer recruitment process
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (HM Government)
- The Children Act 1989 and The Children Act 2004
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975, as amended 2013 and 2020)
- The Bichard Inquiry Recommendations 2004 which is the foundation of modern safer recruitment practice in education
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 which governs how candidate data is collected, stored and processed
- Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 — governing right to work requirements
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings 2022 (Safer Recruitment Consortium)

Where any legislative or statutory change affects the content of this policy, Elevate Beyond will update it within 30 days and notify all registered candidates of any change to their obligations.

5. Our Safer Recruitment Commitment

Elevate Beyond Limited commits to the following standards in everything it does related to candidate recruitment and vetting:

- No candidate will be presented to any client until every step of the seven-step vetting process is complete and recorded on the Single Central Record.
- No step in the vetting process will be waived, shortened or deferred for any reason including urgency, familiarity or prior relationship with the candidate.
- Every vetting decision will be made by a person who holds current Safer Recruitment in Education certification.
- The Single Central Record will be maintained accurately, kept up to date and made available to commissioning bodies on request.
- Any concern arising during the vetting process that suggests a candidate may pose a risk to children will be escalated to the DSL immediately and the candidate will not be presented to any client until the matter is resolved.
- Elevate Beyond will never misrepresent the status of a candidate's compliance to a client setting. If a check is outstanding, the client will be told.
- All candidate data gathered during the vetting process will be handled in strict compliance with our GDPR and Data Protection Policy.
- This policy and the vetting process it describes will be reviewed annually in September and updated immediately following any change to KCSiE or other relevant statutory guidance.

6. The Seven-Step Vetting Process

Every candidate registered with Elevate Beyond must complete the following seven checks before their name is presented to any client. These steps are non-negotiable and apply equally to all candidates regardless of their experience, qualifications or previous working relationship with the agency.

Check	Required Before Placement	Recorded on SCR
Step 1 — Enhanced DBS with Children's Barred List	✓ Yes — absolute requirement	✓ Yes
Step 2 — DBS Update Service Registration	✓ Yes (or new DBS in process)	✓ Yes
Step 3 — Two professional references verified by phone	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Step 4 — Right to Work in the UK	✓ Yes — original documents sighted	✓ Yes
Step 5 — Online and social media check	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Step 6 — Prohibition from teaching check (QTS holders)	✓ Yes — where applicable	✓ Yes
Step 7 — Signed Candidate Agreement	✓ Yes — before first placement	✓ Yes

All seven checks must be complete before a candidate is presented to any client. Elevate Beyond operates a no exceptions policy in this regard.

7. Step 1 — Enhanced DBS Check with Children's Barred List

An Enhanced DBS check with children's barred list is a legal requirement for anyone undertaking regulated activity with children. Every placement Elevate Beyond makes falls within the definition of regulated activity. This check is therefore mandatory for every candidate without exception.

Where Elevate Beyond processes the DBS

Where a new DBS check is required, Elevate Beyond will process it through our uCheck account. The candidate will be guided through the application process and no placement will be made until the certificate has been issued and reviewed by the DSL.

Where a candidate has an existing DBS from another employer

Where a candidate holds an Enhanced DBS certificate from a previous employer, Elevate Beyond will:

- Sight the original certificate in person or via a verified document sharing process and retain a copy.
- Confirm that the certificate includes the children's barred list check.
- Confirm that the candidate is subscribed to the DBS Update Service.
- Complete an online Update Service check with the candidate's consent.
- Repeat this Update Service check annually for as long as the candidate remains registered.

Where a candidate's DBS certificate does not include a children's barred list check or where the candidate is not subscribed to the DBS Update Service, a new DBS check through Elevate Beyond will be required before any placement proceeds.

Important

A candidate who has a break in service of three months or more whether due to non-placement, personal leave or any other reason will be required to complete a fresh DBS Update Service check before returning to placement. Where a candidate has not been registered with the Update Service, a new Enhanced DBS certificate will be required.

8. Step 2 — DBS Update Service

The DBS Update Service allows employers to check the ongoing status of a candidate's DBS certificate in real time, at no cost to the candidate. Elevate Beyond requires all candidates to be registered with the Update Service as a condition of registration with the agency.

Registration with the Update Service allows Elevate Beyond to:

- Verify that the information on a candidate's original DBS certificate has not changed since it was issued.
- Complete annual status checks without requiring a new DBS certificate each year.

- Respond immediately if a candidate's DBS status changes during a placement and take appropriate action.

Where an Update Service check reveals a change to a candidate's certificate, the candidate will be suspended from all placements immediately. The DSL will conduct a risk assessment and where appropriate, the relevant client will be notified. A new DBS certificate will be required before any further placement proceeds.

9. Step 3 — Professional References

Elevate Beyond requires a minimum of two professional references for every candidate. References are not a formality they are one of the most important tools we have for identifying candidates whose professional history may give cause for concern.

Our reference requirements

- Both references must be professional references not personal or character references from friends or family.
- At least one reference must be from a role involving direct work with children or young people.
- One reference must be from the candidate's current or most recent employer.
- Both references must be from different organisations where possible.
- References must cover a continuous period and any employment gaps must be accounted for.

How we verify references

Written references alone are not sufficient. Every reference received by Elevate Beyond will be followed up with a telephone call to the referee to:

- Confirm the referee's identity, role and relationship with the candidate.
- Verify that the information provided in the written reference is accurate and complete.
- Ask directly whether the referee has any concerns about the candidate's suitability to work with children.
- Ask whether there have been any disciplinary proceedings, allegations or concerns relating to the candidate's conduct with children during the period they worked together.
- Confirm the reason the candidate left that employment.
- Ask whether the previous employer would re-employ the candidate.

The content of reference calls will be documented and retained on the candidate's file. Where a referee raises concerns however minor the DSL will be informed before any placement decision is made.

What we will not accept

- Open references or testimonials written for general purposes.
- References from relatives, partners, or personal friends.
- References that have been provided as part of a settlement or compromise agreement.
- Written references that have not been followed up by telephone.

Where a candidate cannot provide references that meet our requirements, they will not be registered with Elevate Beyond until satisfactory references are obtained. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

10. Step 4 — Right to Work Verification

Every candidate registered with Elevate Beyond must have the legal right to work in the United Kingdom. This is a legal obligation and one that every candidate must satisfy before any placement is made.

During the registration process, Elevate Beyond will:

- Sight original right to work documents typically a valid passport, biometric residence permit, or share code for those with settled or pre-settled status.
- Retain a copy of the relevant document, dated and signed as a true copy by the DSL.
- Record the document type, reference number and verification date on the Single Central Record.

Where a candidate's right to work in the UK is time-limited, Elevate Beyond will record the expiry date and conduct a repeat check before that date. A candidate whose right to work expires during a placement will be removed from that placement immediately until their right to work is re-established.

Elevate Beyond will not place any candidate who cannot demonstrate a current legal right to work in the UK. This requirement applies regardless of the nature or urgency of the vacancy.

11. Step 5 — Online and Social Media Check

KCSiE 2025 requires agencies and employers to conduct online searches as part of safer recruitment. Elevate Beyond conducts an online and social media check on every candidate as part of the registration process.

What we check

The online check will include:

- A Google search using the candidate's full name, name combined with previous employers, and name combined with job title.
- A search of the candidate's public-facing social media profiles, including LinkedIn, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter).
- A review of any publicly accessible professional profiles or publications.

What we are looking for

The purpose of the online check is not to gather personal information about a candidate's private life. We are specifically looking for:

- Any content that suggests a safeguarding risk to children or young people.
- Any content that is inconsistent with the professional standards expected of someone working in an SEMH or AP setting.
- Any content that contradicts information provided during the registration process.

What happens if something is found

Where the online check identifies content that gives cause for concern, the DSL will review the finding and determine whether it warrants further discussion with the candidate or whether it prevents

registration. Candidates will be made aware that an online check will be conducted and will be given the opportunity to address any findings before a final registration decision is made.

The outcome of every online check will be recorded on the candidate's file, whether or not anything of concern was found. Where nothing of concern is found, this will also be documented.

12. Step 6 — Prohibition from Teaching Check

For candidates who hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status (QTLS), Elevate Beyond will conduct a check through the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) to confirm that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order that prevents them from teaching.

A prohibition order means a person is legally barred from undertaking teaching work in England. Placing a prohibited person in a teaching role would be a serious legal breach. Elevate Beyond will therefore not present any QTS or QTLS-holding candidate to any client until this check has been completed and returned as clear.

For candidates who hold QTS obtained after 7 May 1999, Elevate Beyond will also verify that the candidate has successfully completed their statutory induction period.

For candidates who do not hold QTS or QTLS and who are not undertaking teaching work, this step is not applicable. It will be recorded as not applicable on the Single Central Record.

13. Step 7 — Signed Candidate Agreement

Before any placement begins, every candidate registered with Elevate Beyond must sign a Candidate Agreement. This is a formal document that sets out the terms of the candidate's registration with Elevate Beyond and the standards they commit to upholding during every placement.

The Candidate Agreement covers:

- The candidate's understanding of and commitment to Elevate Beyond's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- The candidate's commitment to the standards set out in Elevate Beyond's Candidate Code of Conduct.
- Consent for Elevate Beyond to process their personal data in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Policy.
- The candidate's obligation to notify Elevate Beyond immediately if they are charged with, cautioned for, or convicted of any offence whether or not it relates directly to their work with children.
- The candidate's obligation to notify Elevate Beyond immediately if they become the subject of any safeguarding allegation or concern in any setting.
- The candidate's agreement to complete a DBS break in service declaration following any gap in registration of three months or more.
- The candidate's understanding that their registration may be suspended or terminated where any concern arises about their suitability to work with children.

A signed copy of the Candidate Agreement is retained on the candidate's file. A copy is provided to the candidate at the point of signing.

14. Employment Gaps and History

During the candidate registration interview, Elevate Beyond will review the candidate's complete employment history and ask them to account for any gaps. This is not a punitive exercise it is a standard element of safer recruitment that helps to build a complete and accurate picture of the candidate's professional background.

All candidates are required to provide a full employment history covering at least the past five years, with any gaps clearly identified. Where gaps exist, the candidate will be asked to explain the reason and confirm this in writing. Common legitimate reasons for gaps include career breaks, travel, caring responsibilities, study, redundancy or illness. These will not in themselves prevent registration.

Where a gap cannot be satisfactorily explained, or where the candidate's account of their employment history is inconsistent with information provided by referees, the DSL will determine whether to proceed with registration. Where a pattern of frequent changes in employer particularly in roles involving children is identified, this will be explored in detail during the registration interview.

Any unexplained gap in employment history or any significant inconsistency between the candidate's account and information provided by third parties, will be escalated to the DSL before a registration decision is made.

15. Overseas Candidates

Where a candidate has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom for a period of six months or more within the last five years, a standard UK DBS check alone will not provide a complete picture of their criminal history. In such cases, Elevate Beyond will require an overseas criminal record check in addition to the UK DBS check.

Details of how to obtain a certificate of good conduct or overseas criminal record disclosure are available on the GOV.UK website for each country. Elevate Beyond will guide candidates through this process but cannot make a placement until satisfactory overseas clearance has been received.

Overseas checks can take considerable time depending on the country involved. Candidates should be advised of this at the earliest point of registration so that checks can be initiated promptly. Elevate Beyond will not make any placement pending the receipt of overseas clearance, regardless of urgency.

16. Cautions and Convictions — Risk Assessment

The existence of a caution or conviction on a candidate's DBS certificate does not automatically prevent registration with Elevate Beyond. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and its Exceptions Order (as amended in 2013 and 2020) set out which convictions and cautions must be disclosed and which are protected. Elevate Beyond will apply these rules appropriately.

Where a DBS certificate discloses a caution or conviction that is not protected, the DSL will conduct a risk assessment. This assessment will take into account:

- The nature and seriousness of the offence.
- How much time has passed since the offence.
- Whether the offence is directly relevant to working with children or young people.
- The candidate's explanation and any evidence of rehabilitation or change.
- Whether there is a pattern of offending.

The risk assessment will be documented in writing and retained on the candidate's file. Where Elevate Beyond decides to proceed with registration despite a disclosed caution or conviction, the relevant client will be informed before any placement is made and their written agreement will be obtained.

Where the DSL determines that the nature of the disclosure means that a candidate poses an unacceptable risk to the young people in the settings Elevate Beyond serves, registration will be declined. This decision will be communicated to the candidate in writing.

Candidates are required to disclose any new caution, charge, or conviction to Elevate Beyond immediately regardless of whether it is directly related to their work with children. Failure to disclose will result in immediate suspension from placement and may result in termination of registration.

17. The Single Central Record

Elevate Beyond maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) for all registered candidates. The SCR is the master compliance record for the organisation and documents every check completed for every candidate.

The SCR records the following for each candidate:

- Full name and role type.
- Date of Enhanced DBS check, certificate number, and disclosure level.
- DBS Update Service registration date and date of most recent status check.
- Reference 1 — name of referee, organisation, role, date verified by telephone.
- Reference 2 — name of referee, organisation, role, date verified by telephone.
- Right to work document type, reference number, and date verified.
- Date of online and social media check and outcome.
- Prohibition from teaching check date and outcome (or confirmation of not applicable).
- Date Candidate Agreement signed.
- Date of most recent annual review.

The SCR is maintained by the DSL and reviewed annually. It is available to client settings and commissioning bodies on request. No candidate will be listed on the SCR as placement-ready until all seven steps are complete.

18. Candidate Registration Interview

Before any candidate is formally registered with Elevate Beyond, the DSL will conduct a registration interview. This is not a job interview, it is a structured conversation designed to verify the information

provided during the registration process, explore the candidate's employment history, and assess their understanding of safeguarding and their professional responsibilities.

The registration interview will cover:

- A review of the candidate's full employment history, including all gaps.
- Verification of qualifications relevant to the roles they will undertake.
- Discussion of the candidate's experience of working in SEMH or AP settings.
- The candidate's understanding of safeguarding and their obligations under KCSiE.
- Disclosure of any cautions, convictions or pending matters that may appear on a DBS check.
- The candidate's understanding of professional boundaries and safer working practices.
- The candidate's motivations for working in SEMH and AP settings.

Notes from the registration interview will be retained on the candidate's file. Where the interview reveals information that requires further exploration before a registration decision can be made, this will be documented and the candidate will be informed.

19. Annual Renewal and Ongoing Monitoring

Registration with Elevate Beyond is not a one-time event. The safety of the young people in the settings we serve depends on our compliance information remaining current and accurate throughout the period a candidate is registered with us.

Elevate Beyond conducts an annual review for every registered candidate. This review includes:

- A repeat DBS Update Service check to confirm the status of the candidate's certificate has not changed.
- Confirmation that the candidate's right to work in the UK remains valid.
- A request for the candidate to confirm in writing that they have not been charged with, cautioned for or convicted of any offence since their last review.
- Confirmation that the candidate has completed the required safeguarding training update within the last 12 months.
- A review of any concerns or incidents that arose during the preceding 12 months in connection with that candidate.

Where an annual review identifies any matter that requires further assessment, the candidate will be suspended from placement until the matter is resolved. Annual review dates are recorded on the SCR and the DSL takes responsibility for ensuring they are conducted on time.

20. Candidates Who Return After a Break

Where a candidate has not been placed through Elevate Beyond for a period of three months or more for any reason they are required to complete a DBS Break in Service Declaration before returning to placement.

This declaration requires the candidate to confirm in writing that they have had no involvement with the police during their period away, and that there is nothing new to disclose that would affect their suitability to work with children.

In addition to the declaration, Elevate Beyond will conduct a fresh DBS Update Service check before the candidate is returned to placement. Where a candidate is not subscribed to the Update Service, a new Enhanced DBS certificate will be required before any placement proceeds.

A copy of the Break in Service Declaration template is provided at Appendix B of this policy.

21. When Concerns Arise During a Placement

Where a concern arises about a candidate's conduct or suitability during a placement whether raised by the client setting, a young person, a parent or any other professional, Elevate Beyond will act immediately. The following process applies:

1. The concern will be reported to the Elevate Beyond DSL without delay.
2. The candidate will be suspended from their placement as a precautionary measure while the concern is assessed. This is a neutral act and does not imply a finding of guilt.
3. The DSL will consult with the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on the same day where possible.
4. The DSL will liaise with the DSL of the host setting to ensure information is shared appropriately and in compliance with our data protection obligations.
5. A risk assessment will be conducted and documented before any decision is made about whether the candidate returns to placement.
6. Where the concern meets the threshold for referral to the DBS or other statutory agencies, this referral will be made without delay regardless of whether the candidate has resigned or ceased engaging with the process.

Elevate Beyond will co-operate fully with any investigation by statutory agencies. We will not seek to manage or limit an investigation to protect the agency's commercial interests. The welfare of the young people in our clients' settings is the only consideration that matters in these situations.

22. Record Keeping and Data Protection

All candidate data gathered during the registration and vetting process is handled in strict accordance with Elevate Beyond's GDPR and Data Protection Policy and the UK GDPR.

Specific provisions relating to recruitment records:

- Compliance documents such as DBS certificates, reference records, right to work documents, signed agreements are retained for a minimum of six years from the date the candidate ceases to be registered with Elevate Beyond.
- DBS certificate numbers are recorded on the SCR. Full DBS certificates are not retained beyond the period necessary to process the check, in line with DBS guidelines.
- Candidates have the right to request access to their personal data held by Elevate Beyond. Requests should be made in writing to info@elevate-beyond.co.uk.
- Where a candidate's registration is declined on the basis of information revealed during vetting, the reason will be documented but communicated to the candidate only to the extent required by law.
- All records are held securely and accessible only to those with a legitimate need to access them in connection with their role at Elevate Beyond.

23. Summary

Safer recruitment is the first and most important line of defence in safeguarding the young people in the settings Elevate Beyond serves. No amount of monitoring, supervision or policy can compensate for allowing an unsuitable person to enter a setting where vulnerable young people are present.

Every step in this policy exists for that reason. Our seven-step vetting process is designed to be rigorous, consistent and thorough. It will be applied to every candidate, without exception and every time.

Clients working with Elevate Beyond can be confident that every candidate we present has been through a vetting process that meets and exceeds the standards set out in KCSiE 2025. Our founder's background in statutory child protection means we understand what is at stake and we will never treat that lightly.

Contact

For any queries about this policy or about the vetting status of a registered candidate:
Sulayman Cham — Founder and Director — Elevate Beyond Limited
Phone: 01615248467 | Email: info@elevate-beyond.co.uk
Website: www.elevate-beyond.co.uk/safeguarding

Appendix A — Candidate Compliance Checklist

The following checklist is completed for every candidate at the point of registration and updated at each annual review. It forms part of the Single Central Record.

Compliance Item	Date Completed	Verified by
Enhanced DBS check with children's barred list		
DBS certificate number recorded		
DBS Update Service — registered and confirmed		
Reference 1 — written reference received and verified by phone		
Reference 2 — written reference received and verified by phone		
Right to work — original documents sighted and copy retained		
Online and social media check completed		
Prohibition from teaching check (QTS) OR noted as N/A		
Overseas check (if applicable) OR noted as N/A		
Candidate Agreement signed and copy retained		

Compliance Item	Date Completed	Verified by
Registration interview completed and notes retained		
KCSiE confirmation signed by candidate		
Added to Single Central Record		

Appendix B — DBS Break in Service Declaration

Elevate Beyond Limited — DBS Break in Service Declaration

To be completed by any candidate who has not been placed through Elevate Beyond for a period of three months or more.

Candidate Name: _____

Role Type: _____

Date of Last Placement: _____

Date of This Declaration: _____

Declaration:

I confirm that during the period I have not been placed through Elevate Beyond Limited, I have not been charged with, cautioned for, or convicted of any offence. I have not been the subject of any safeguarding allegation, investigation, or concern in any professional or voluntary setting. I understand that failure to disclose any such matter is a serious breach of my obligations to Elevate Beyond and may result in the permanent termination of my registration.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For office use — Verified by DSL: _____ Date: _____

Elevate Beyond Limited — Supporting Every Step Forward

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