



SKIP

Recruitment

Policy

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Introduction

The aim of the policy is to outline the processes for recruitment of all SKIP volunteers, particularly focusing on project volunteers.

It will clarify the recruitment requirements for three main groups:

- Project Volunteers
- Volunteers not participating in summer project (e.g. Branch Committee members, mentors and supporting alumni)
- Volunteers in a role responsible for supervision or management of project volunteers (e.g. project coordinators, National Committee & Trustees)

This policy also provides guidance on safe recruitment, stipulating the universal requirements for recruitment across SKIP, and special circumstances where additional measures, including criminal record checks, must be undertaken.

Diversity & Equality in SKIP Recruitment

The Equality Act 2010 states that it is against the law to discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic, namely:

- Age
- Sex
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion or belief
- Race
 - For the purposes of the Act 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins
- Disability
 - Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
 - SKIP volunteers are required to complete a health declaration form detailing any medical issues, this allows SKIP to provide support to that volunteer, if required on project. The information provided in the health declaration does not affect the recruitment process. SKIP will make every attempt to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help volunteers overcome disadvantages resulting from impairment.
- Sexual orientation and gender reassignment
 - In the SKIP Bylaws, it states 'Potential volunteers should be made aware of the Project Country's laws and customs regarding sexuality and gender identity at the time of application'. This is due to the number of countries we work in and the differing legislation. This should not affect the recruitment of volunteers.
- Criminal Records
 - Having a criminal record does not necessarily mean that a person cannot fulfil their role.
 - SKIP is committed to equal opportunities and will make all efforts to prevent unfair discrimination against those with criminal records, to ensure that suitable applicants are not refused posts because of offences which are not relevant to the role, and which do not make them a risk in the role.
 - Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013), there are a number of posts, activities and occupations which are 'exempt' from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This enables organisation to ask applicants to disclose both 'spent' and 'unspent' cautions and convictions. The position of SKIP project volunteer is an 'exempt' post as defined on the Disclosure and Barring Service website: "Any work which is defined as regulated activity relating to children or vulnerable adults within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)".

Reports of discrimination on the grounds of protected characteristics will be managed by the SKIP Trustees through the SKIP Complaints Policy.

Project Volunteer Recruitment

First stage of Project Volunteer recruitment

Branches should refer to the SKIP bylaws before commencing volunteer recruitment to ensure that the recruitment processes reflect the ethos of SKIP and follow the requirements laid out within these bylaws.

Branches should make every attempt to complete recruitment by the recruitment deadline date. If more time is required, this should be negotiated with the Recruitment Co-ordinator, Branch Buddy and Mentor.

As branches recruit volunteers, they should upload a list of names and contact details to the relevant g-drive folder. If volunteers drop-out, this list should be updated immediately. As the volunteer list is updated, the second stage of recruitment will commence.

Second stage of Project Volunteer recruitment

Before a prospective volunteer is confirmed, they must complete all the 'SKIP Steps to Summer'. This process is overseen by a supporting alumnus in the role of Recruitment Co-ordinator. These steps are detailed in a document sent out to all prospective volunteers confirmed through branch recruitment. The steps are as follows:

Step 1: Sign up for SKIP membership

Once signed up with our online platform, the prospective volunteers will receive emails with essential information to allow them to complete the 'Steps to Summer'. In this step, they will be required to sign the SKIP Code of Conduct.

Step 2: Pay the volunteer fee

Breakdown of the fee:

- SKIP membership fee = All SKIP members, regardless of whether they are going on project, are required to pay this fee.
- SKIP overseas fee = All SKIP volunteers who travel abroad are required to pay this fee, which covers SKIP's public liability and organisational insurance, giving us international protection from any claims made against us for damages occurring as a result of our activities.
- Criminal Record Check fee = Every SKIP project volunteer is required to have a valid criminal record check and there is often a charge associated with this.

Step 3: Complete SKIP Volunteer forms

This includes:

- SKIP Volunteer Agreement - detailing what we expect from a SKIP volunteer and in turn, what a volunteer can expect from SKIP. Volunteers are required to electronically sign and date this agreement.
- Volunteer contact details
- Next of Kin (NOK) contact details

- Health Declaration – this gathers confidential information on any health issues that the volunteer chooses to disclose. The information is reviewed by a SKIP Trustee. If there are concerns regarding a volunteer’s health or safety, this information may be shared with relevant parties. All project volunteers are made aware of this and asked for consent on completing the form.
- Contingency fund agreement - this fund is a designated pool of money that SKIP can use to make short-term loans to volunteers to enable them to purchase emergency flights. The contingency fund is not in any way a substitute for an insurance policy, and all money volunteers receive from the contingency fund belongs to the charity, and we expect it to be returned in full within a designated time period.
- Guarantor contact details for contingency fund agreement
- Criminal Record Disclosure -. All SKIP project volunteers are asked to disclose information on the initial volunteer agreement form. There is a space for individuals to provide details of the disclosure, and advice on writing this disclosure from NACRO.
- First Aid qualifications – for those who are willing to act as first aiders, they will be asked which organisation provided the first aid training and the date of the certificate.

Step 4: Obtain criminal record check

All SKIP Project Volunteers must have a valid criminal record check. The process is detailed later in the policy.

Step 5: Guarantor to complete Contingency Fund Agreement

Project Volunteers are required to provide contact details for a person whom they have allocated as their guarantor for the contingency fund repayment, if required.

Step 6: Complete mandatory online training

All SKIP volunteers are required to complete online training modules covering mandatory topics.

Following step 6, volunteers become confirmed SKIP Project Volunteers, allowing them to make travel arrangements. They are still required to complete the final stage before they travel to project.

Step 7: Complete SKIP Travel Form

The SKIP travel form collects information on travel plans, asks for a personal travel risk assessment and for confirmation that the volunteer has purchased travel insurance. Travel insurance is a personal responsibility and SKIP strongly advises that volunteers purchase a policy as soon as they book flights. Before purchasing travel insurance, volunteers should read the policy documents carefully, ensuring that it covers them for the entire length of their trip and every activity they intend to do whilst away. SKIP also strongly advises that volunteers purchase travel insurance from a UK based company, as the UK will then be deemed their country of residence for evacuation purposes. If in Europe, volunteers should

take an EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). Volunteers are also advised to consult with a travel clinic before departing, for health advice specific to their project country.

Additional notes

- Before project, volunteers will also be required to attend mandatory branch training sessions and anything else the branch deems necessary before project.
- Prospective volunteers are also encouraged to attend national training events.
- Additionally, one member per wave, ideally the group leader, must attend the group leader training day.

Recruitment for non project SKIP volunteers

Recruitment procedures for the following roles are contained within the bylaws:

- Branch Committee members
- National Committee
- Trustees
- Supporting alumni (including branch mentors)

Procedures for Criminal Record Checks

Additional to these recruitment procedures, a decision must be made for all potential volunteers regarding the eligibility of their role for a Criminal Record Check.

As SKIP has branches throughout the United Kingdom, the universal term of 'criminal record check' will be used in this policy. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) provide criminal record checks for English and Welsh SKIP volunteers. PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Group scheme) provide criminal record checks for Scottish SKIP volunteers. Access NI provides criminal record checks for volunteers in Northern Ireland.

Eligibility for Criminal Record Checks

All prospective SKIP Project volunteers and those responsible for their day to day supervision and management are required to have a valid criminal record check, a process which discloses all previous cautions and convictions, irrespective of status.

As an organisation, we currently define those responsible for day to day management or supervision of project volunteers as:

- Branch Project Coordinators, due to their responsibilities for managing the project through the summer.

- National Committee and Trustees, due to their responsibility for directly managing volunteers during incidents through the SKIP Summer Support system.

Criminal record checks reveal any criminal and/or police records and will also include information about criminal convictions and cautions. It will also check if the individual has been banned from working with children. It is a criminal offence for employers or voluntary organisations to knowingly appoint a barred person into a role involving regulated activity. If an individual has an offending history which has resulted in them being barred from regulated activity with children, this automatically means that the individual will not be accepted into the role.

Type of Criminal Record Check

Due to the nature of the work undertaken by SKIP Project Volunteers, the criminal record check must take into account their suitability for working with children. The table below details the type of check deemed necessary for SKIP Project Volunteers and those responsible for their supervision across the UK.

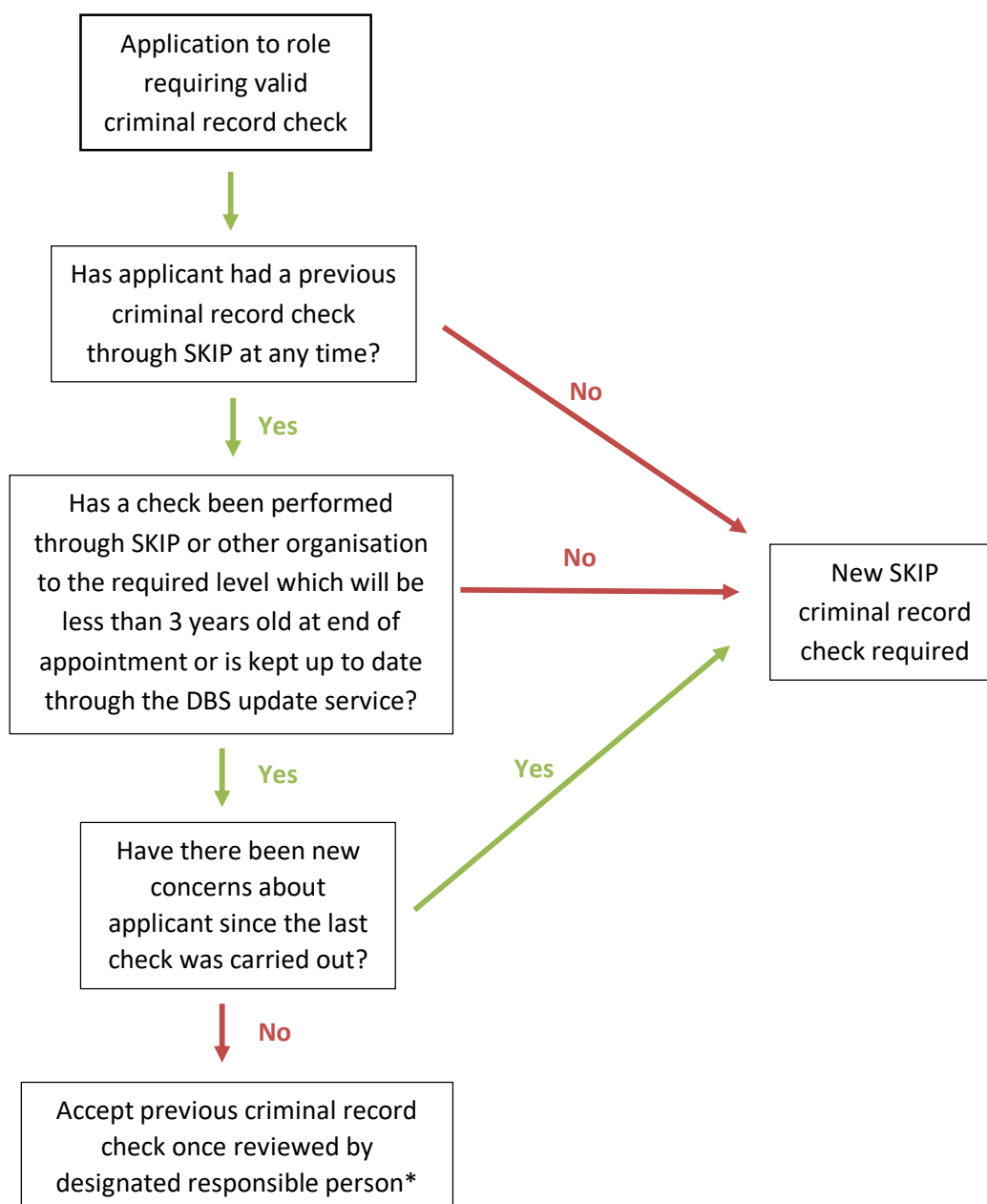
| Statutory Body | Country | Type of Check |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Disclosure and Barring Service | England and Wales | Enhanced check including children's barred list. |
| Disclosure Scotland | Scotland | Enhanced check including PVG scheme in respect of regulated work with children. |
| Access NI | Northern Ireland | Enhanced check. |

SKIP volunteers who have not been resident in the UK since birth

If the applicant has been a permanent resident (for more than 2 years) in another country not covered by their criminal record check since the age of 10 years old (the age of criminal responsibility in the UK), efforts will be made to undergo further criminal record checks through their previous country of residence. There is UK government guidance available online regarding processes and availability of this process for most countries. If an applicant is from a country where it is not possible to obtain an additional criminal record check, this should not prevent them from working with SKIP, but must be taken into consideration as part of their recruitment decision.

Use of previous Criminal Record Checks

To reduce administrative burden through unnecessary rechecking of individuals, repeat project volunteers and others eligible for a criminal record check may use a previous check in certain circumstances. The following flow chart can be used to decide whether a previous check can be used:



**Responsible person: Annually, each branch has a committee member who is allocated the responsible person for signing off that they have seen original documents for the purpose of background checks. A record of the background check having been seen, such as an email sent to the branch account, must be made.*

Procedure for responding to disclosures

If a criminal record is disclosed at any stage, the SKIP Trustee responsible for Child Safeguarding will contact the applicant and start the risk assessment procedure (see Appendix A). For each disclosure, two SKIP trustees will jointly complete a risk assessment, in discussion with the individual, to enable them to come to decision.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to help SKIP gather the necessary information to assess whether the individual may pose a risk. An assessment of an applicant's skills, qualifications, experience and conviction circumstances will be weighed up against the risk assessment criteria for the role. An applicant's criminal record will be assessed in relation to the tasks to be performed and the circumstances in which the work is to be carried out. In addition to the discussion, SKIP will consider whether they need to obtain any other information to inform their risk assessment decision e.g. a reference.

Issues that will be considered in the risk assessment may include:

- Nature of the offence
- Relevance of the offence to the role
- Seriousness of the offence
- Impact of disclosure on work with children and/or local communities
- Impact of disclosure on work with SKIP finances or items of value
- Any opportunities for the post-holder to reoffend during time as SKIP volunteer
- The safeguards available to minimise any potential risks

The final recruitment decision will be at the discretion of the SKIP Trustees. Throughout the recruitment process, the individual will be kept informed of relevant discussions. The information will be shared with SKIP Trustees and relevant members of National Committee. If required, external advice may be sought from organisations such as Nacro and Apex Scotland. All information will be stored securely as per the SKIP Data Protection bylaws and Policy.

If, at any stage, the individual disputes the information provided through the criminal record check, SKIP will contact the relevant authority to confirm the information before continuing their investigation. The individual will be told who in SKIP knows about their record, as they need to feel confident that their personal and sensitive information is managed appropriately, unless there is a specific reason for disclosing further. The reasons for the final decision should be based on an objective and rational approach. A formal record of the decision will be securely retained, containing clear reasons to appoint or reject the applicant. The decision will then be communicated to the applicant.

Data Protection and Criminal Record Checks

All forms of data regarding SKIP volunteers is held in accordance with our Data Protection policy.

Data regarding criminal record checks is particularly sensitive. Disclosure information is passed to the Trustee responsible for Child Protection and the Supporting Alumni Recruitment Lead in the first instance. It will only be shared with those who are involved in the recruitment decision.

Disclosure information will be held in secure email accounts as part of SKIP's web domain accessible only to SKIP Trustees and the Supporting Alumni Recruitment Lead. This will be held for 3 years and then permanently deleted.

Appendix 1: SKIP criminal record risk assessment form

This form is to be completed and used to assess criminal record disclosures before confirming SKIP volunteer status. Information will be stored securely. It will be completed by the SKIP Trustee responsible for Child Protection along with another Trustee, it will then be discussed with other SKIP Trustees, if required.

Section A

To be completed by SKIP Trustee

Please complete in full:

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name of applicant: | | | | |
| Branch: | | | | |
| Level of disclosure required: | Enhanced and barred <input type="checkbox"/> | Enhanced <input type="checkbox"/> | Standard <input type="checkbox"/> | Basic <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Date of assessment: | | | | |
| Name of assessor one (Trustee): | | | | |
| Name of assessor two (Trustee): | | | | |

| Question | Yes/No | Please provide details |
|--|--------|------------------------|
| Has the applicant declared any cautions, convictions, reprimands, final warnings or bind overs in the UK or any other country, or are they under police investigation? | | |
| Is this a single offence or has there been more than one offence? | | |
| Nature of conviction(s) or police intelligence disclosed (Continue on separate sheet if necessary) | | |
| Offence(s): | | |
| Date of conviction(s): | | |
| Sentence(s) received: | | |
| Age at time of offence(s): | | |
| Length of time since conviction(s): | | |

Section B

To be completed by SKIP Trustee during risk assessment meeting

| Question (Please provide details) | | |
|---|--------|------------------------|
| What were the circumstances surrounding the offence(s)? | | |
| Attitude to the offence(s) | | |
| Efforts made to not reoffend | | |
| Question | Yes/No | Please provide details |
| Have the individual's circumstances changed since the offence(s)? If so, how? | | |
| Are the offence(s) relevant to the post? | | |
| Is the individual taking part in a specific remedial/action programme? | | |
| Does the nature of the role present any opportunities for the post-holder to reoffend in the place of work? | | |
| Does the post involve regular one-to-one/unsupervised contact with vulnerable people? | | |
| Does the post involve direct contact with the public? | | |
| Does the post involve direct responsibility for finance or items of value? | | |
| Does the post involve a significant level of trust i.e. nursing or caring for people? | | |
| Is the individual barred from working in regulated activity? (If applicable) | | |
| Were suitable references obtained and ID checked? (If references gave cause for concern please state details) | | |
| What level of supervision does the post-holder receive? | | |

Enter below any further questions you feel may be relevant to the post in relation to criminal convictions.

| Question | Please provide details |
|--|------------------------|
| | |

| | | | | | |
|---------|--|-------------|--|-------|--|
| Signed: | | Print name: | | Date: | |
|---------|--|-------------|--|-------|--|

Section C

To be completed by SKIP Trustee after risk assessment meeting has taken place

Please enter below any measures recommended for the individual in light of the above information to minimise the risk of any reoccurrence of any potential criminal activity or associated behaviour. This can be expanded or adapted for the particular role as required.

| | |
|----|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |

Section D

Criminal record risk hazard form

Please record below any organisational risk of harm. This should relate specifically to the impact on the organisation and not the individual.

| |
|--|
| Nature of hazard? e.g. reputational risk, risk of sexual harm, risk of theft |
| |
| Who might be harmed? |
| |
| What is already/will be done to minimise risk? |
| |
| Likelihood of hazard/risk occurring? Please select from: 1 = Very unlikely 2 = Fairly unlikely 3 = Fairly likely 4 = Very likely |
| |
| Impact of hazard/risk? Please select from: 1 = Minor impact 2 = Fairly serious impact 3 = Very serious impact |
| |
| What is the remaining risk based on likelihood and impact? e.g. low/medium/high |
| |

Section E

To be completed by all Trustees involved in the risk assessment

Please select one option:

☐ The information above has been considered and **we are satisfied** that it is safe to allow the named applicant/employee to commence/continue work with SKIP.

☐ The information above has been considered and **we are not satisfied** that it is safe to allow the named applicant/employee to commence/continue work with SKIP.

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Final decision of SKIP Trustees with detailed reasoning: | |
| Signed: SKIP Trustee | |
| Print name and title | Date: |
| Signed: SKIP Trustee | |
| Print name and title | Date: |