

REFERENCES POLICY

All offers of employment at Turning Point Scotland are conditional upon the receipt of a **minimum** of 2 references which confirm the candidate's suitability to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the role and which confirm the candidate's work history and level of previous experience. In addition to a minimum of 2 references, TPS seek to confirm and verify the individual's work history over the last 3 years as a minimum and the following criteria will apply:

1. **The last 3 years of employment history is covered by a reference from each substantive/notable employer within this time period**
 - Or a reference from the last employer is sought if there is not a current or last employer within the last 3 years, but not going back to employers further than 5 years previous
 - If there has only been 1 employer in the last 3 years, a 2nd reference is required from either a different employer within the last 5 years or a character reference from a professional person who has known the candidate for more than 2 years.
 - In addition a reference will automatically be required from the last relevant/industry specific post, when the individual has worked within health and social care or community based posts before, if this is not already provided within the categories above, but not going back to employers more than 5 years previous

2. For people who have been recently/are currently **studying, unemployed or undertaking volunteer work**, a reference may be provided as follows:
 - a university/college tutor from the last 3 years can verify that the person was studying for the period of time outlined in the application form and provide a basic character reference
 - a DWP employment advisor or similar can verify that the person was 'signing on and job seeking' for the period of time outlined in the application form if the individual
 - a mentor or supervisor from work experience/structured volunteering (not less than 20 days contact time in total) from within the last 18 months can provide a character reference

3. For people who have been recently/are currently **self-employed or working within a family business** with family members please seek advice to particular situation but this list is a guide:
 - Pay slips/evidence for verification that shows: company number, name and address; start, and when relevant, end dates
 - A factual reference if it is a family business
 - A reference from a professional client, company solicitor or accountant
 - In addition a reference is also required from either a different employer within the last 5 years or a character reference from a professional who has known the candidate for more than 2 years

4. **Existing Turning Point Scotland contracted employees** applying for a new internal post will only require a satisfactory reference from their current Service or Departmental Manager unless the post is with a notably different service user group or in a different department. In those cases an additional reference may be sought. Recruiting managers may also view the initial recruitment file and references received from the time of the employee's appointment to satisfactorily verify the individual's suitability and ability to undertake the new post.

5. Standards

All references must be on corporate headed paper, company/institution stamped, or from a traceable email address. Character references from professional people should indicate their current work status and the qualification/PIN number/professional body membership of their status along with contact details for verification. References are verified/cross checked using a range of methods.

The following cannot be accepted: references that can't be adequately verified/cross checked; references received directly from candidates; references from relations/partners; character references from friends that are not professional people; employment references that have been supplied by people who are not allowed to provide a reference under their own employer's policy or are colleagues and it is in lieu of a line manager/formal employer reference.

6. Alternatives

Alternatives may be able to be identified and agreed with the HR department in particular circumstances. This should be done in advance of agreeing alternatives with the candidate. Candidates should be aware that the Head of HR's decision is final in the acceptability or otherwise of a reference/referee.