

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 000956
Date 10 March 2017

Employment Referencing Procedures

Request:

1. Which department/person(s) deals with Employment References at your organisation
[HR Support](#)

and what is the name of the Head of Department?
[Sue Martin](#)
2. What is the average hourly rate of the person(s) dealing with Job References? (If outsourced, how much do you pay annually for this service?)
[£9.72](#)
3. How are Employment References requested for new starters? How are they chased up? (email/telephone/postal service/fax)
[This is automated via Talentlink to the referee's email address, Talentlink allows 3 automated reference chases. If there is no response after the 3rd chase the admin staff will contact the candidate directly via phone and/or email and request that they also chase the referee.](#)
4. How are Employment References completed for ex-employees (email/telephone/postal service/fax)?
[Responses to requests for ex-employee references are usually undertaken by email, however, this is not a corporate standard and each manager may respond differently depending on how the request has been sent in or how the requestor has asked to be responded to.](#)
5. How many hours (on average) does your company (or the outsourced company) spend, each month, requesting employment references for new candidates?
[Two hours a month.](#)
6. How many hours (on average) does your company (or the outsourced company) spend, each month, chasing up employment references for new candidates?
[Two hours a month.](#)

7. How many hours (on average) does your company spend (or the outsourced company), each month, completing employment references for former employees?

In respect of your above question, it has been established after careful consideration that the Council does not hold the above information. Consequently, we are unable to provide any information relating to the above, and are informing you as required by Section 1(1) (a) of the Act, that states:

"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request".

8. How many leavers (on average) does your company have per month?
57
9. How many new starters (on average) does your company have per month?
47
10. How many staff does your organisation employ at the moment?
4,720
- 1) Do you request references for all of your new applicants or just for certain posts? If only certain posts, please can you confirm the job roles in which you do not need references for?
We request references for all new applicants.
- 2) If you need references for a new applicant, how many do you require, or how far back (in years) do you seek references for?
Two for new external applicants.
- 3) When a reference is received, do you verify its origin to ensure that it is real?
Yes
- 4) If yes to the above, how is verification undertaken?
The reference returned is matched to the potential candidate and job applied for.

If the reference is received via email – if the email address is an organisation email address, we check it is received from the named referee.

If it received from a personal address we would contact the Organisation to verify the origin of the reference.

If email is received via post – it is matched to the potential candidate and job applied for.

If the reference is not received on Organisation letter head we would contact the Organisation to verify the origin of the reference.

- 5) Where verification is carried out, how long can this take? (an average per reference is sufficient. A min – max time is also sufficient)
[Approximately 15-30 minutes.](#)
- 6) If a fake reference is discovered prior to the applicant beginning a role, would the application be terminated?
[The offer would be withdrawn.](#)
- 7) What would happen if a reference was discovered to be fake after the person had started their job? Would this be a legal issue, or dealt with via your in-house procedures?
[It would be dealt with under the probation process if they were in their first 6 months of employment or under the disciplinary process if they have been employed longer.](#)
- 8) Have you received a fake reference in the last 2 years?
[No.](#)
- 9) What is the name and email address of your Head/Director of Human Resources? (or equivalent Head of the department that deals with Workforce, Recruitment or People Services).
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