School reference request and follow up

Schools in England. Copy page 1 into a secure request to an authorised referee. Page 2 is for internal use.

Candidate and vacancy _____

Referee and employer _____

Return date and secure contact _____

Dear referee,

Please complete this reference from your organisation’s official account or approved system. If you are replying for a school or college, please arrange for the headteacher or principal to confirm the accuracy of any disciplinary investigation information.

Your position and authority to respond _____

Candidate’s role and dates of employment _____

Capacity in which you know the candidate _____

Reason for leaving or reason given for seeking to leave, if known _____

Suitability for the post

Please give factual examples relevant to the attached job description and person specification. Say when you have insufficient information to answer.

Relevant duties and examples _____

Are you satisfied about suitability to work with children? _____

Relevant substantiated safeguarding information meeting the harm threshold _____

Other relevant factual context or restrictions _____

Apply KCSIE Part four when providing safeguarding information. Exclude allegations found false, malicious, unfounded or unsubstantiated. Follow the guidance on low-level concerns and avoid irrelevant personal information.

Signed by and date _____

Work contact for verification _____

INTERNAL RECORD

Reference verification and follow-up

Complete internally. Save the original response and evidence of verification in the authorised recruitment record.

☐ **Request before interview where possible** KCSIE 302 / ACAS
Explain the timing to applicants. Obtain permission before approaching their current employer. KCSIE expects schools to obtain references before interview where possible. Acas's general practice is to request at conditional offer stage. Record any reason for different timing.

☐ **Confirm the right referee** KCSIE 303
Seek a reference from the current employer through an authorised senior person. Verify the most recent relevant employment if the applicant is not currently employed. Seek the last employer where they worked with children if they no longer do. Reject open or applicant-supplied references.

☐ **Verify the source and content** KCSIE 303
Use an independently verified work contact, confirm electronic provenance, compare dates and reasons for leaving with the application and follow up unclear or inconsistent evidence. Take discrepancies up with the candidate.

☐ **Resolve concerns before confirming** KCSIE 303 TO 304 / DATA PROTECTION
Record factual responses, who considered them and the outcome. Refer safeguarding issues through your school's process. Retain material securely under the recruitment retention policy.

Verified by and date _____

Question, referee or candidate response, and evidence location _____

Decision, unresolved items and follow-up owner _____

Sources

KCSIE 2026 | 302 to 304 and Part four

Acas | Job references

ICO | Recruitment and selection