

1.3 Ask Questions about Personal Conduct, Attitudes, Behaviours of Referees

How to?

It is quite OK to ask, during the conversation you have with a referee, if there have been any disciplinary concerns or proceedings to do with the candidate. If there is information on file then any referee is obliged to share with you the information that they have.

It is sometimes difficult to ask straightforward questions and get straightforward answers from a referee. This can be for a number of reasons but one of the most likely is that disciplinary matters have not been discussed with an employee or past employee and thus are not on file and **cannot** be included in any reference request.

So, try asking straightforward questions and see how far you get. If you feel the referee is being vague or is having to hide something then try the following questions ...

Make sure you explain that the position you are recruiting for can or will bring the prospective candidate into contact with vulnerable people. Anybody living in extreme poverty and/or affected by crisis can be considered vulnerable relative to any member of Oxfam GB staff. Ask the referee if they would be happy/confident that the prospective candidate to be in this position. You could ask the referee if **they** would employ the candidate into such a position or you could ask them if **you** should employ the candidate in this way.

If the candidate has previously worked for another NGO and you are questioning a referee from that organisation be sure to ask the referee if the prospective candidate upheld and promoted the Code of Conduct of the NGO.

Ask a referee if the prospective candidate upheld and championed the values and beliefs of the organisation that they worked for.

You can ask a referee if the candidate was conscious of and able to respect local custom and/or whether they would be able to be courteous and understanding and able to work within a diverse team.

Related Links/Documents

Referencing Guidelines can be found at:

<http://intranet.oxfam.org.uk/support/hr/resourcing/refs>

More guidance on the recruitment process can be found at:

<http://intranet.oxfam.org.uk/support/hr/resourcing>