

Role Description

Adoption Panel Chair



Reports to: Adoption Service Director

The Role

PACT is a supportive and respectful place where people are genuinely passionate about what we do. People are at the heart of PACT and are central to everything we can achieve for the many children and families who need our support. Our success relies upon having great people who thrive within a strongly embedded culture built on professionalism, positivity, innovation and a genuine desire to help others, which defines who we are and what we believe in.

This role is responsible for proactively preparing for Adoption Panel meetings, drawing on both personal and/or professional knowledge and experience to inform the discussion.

As Panel Chair, they will chair the Adoption Panel meetings to reach a recommendation for the Agency Decision Maker in PACT; ensuring that all items of business are covered and that the Panel operates to promote diversity and anti-discriminatory practice, and is in accordance with regulations, statutory guidance, national minimum standards and PACT's policies and procedures.

Key Tasks

1	Safeguard and protect vulnerable adults and children in accordance with PACT's policies and procedures at all times.
2	Demonstrate and uphold PACT's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
3	Prepare for panel meeting by thoroughly reviewing circulated papers in advance, identifying any concerns and notifying the agency advisor if necessary to ensure reports are suitable for submission. (A summary and potential questions will be given to panel members, usually 1 day in advance of the panel session)
4	Chair Adoption Panel meetings as scheduled by PACT and on time: lead panel discussions effectively, provide contributions, and ensure all business is covered in line with regulations, statutory guidance, national minimum standards and PACT's policies and procedures. It is recommended that the Chair attends at least 75% of panels (these usually occur fortnightly), and in addition attends panel training events and relevant ad hoc meetings as required.
5	Facilitate the active participation of all panel members in contributing to the panel's consideration of cases and to the making of clear, well-evidenced recommendations with documented reasons for these.
6	Ensure that panels are conducted in a timely, respectful, sensitive and non-discriminatory

	manner, addressing diversity and promoting anti-discriminatory practice at all times, while treating all attendees with respect and courtesy.
7	Take responsibility for leading the recommendation outcome on each case, drawing on both personal and/or professional knowledge and experience.
8	Ensure panel minutes are clear, accurate, agreed upon, with reasons for recommendations recorded, signed and promptly shared with the agency's decision makers.
9	Safeguard the confidentiality of all papers submitted to the panel and panel discussions and adhere to PACT's data and confidentiality policy.
10	Collaborate with decision-makers and senior managers as needed, providing quality assurance feedback to PACT on the standard of reports submitted to panel and identifying areas for improvement.
11	Ensure, with the Panel Advisor, that senior managers are informed of concerns relating to both individual cases and broader issues.
12	Be involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the recruitment of any new panel members as the need arises, • the consideration of the termination of appointment of any panel member, • the planning and delivery of training for other panel members.
13	Together with the agency advisor, review the performance of the central list of panel members at least annually, providing constructive feedback for both individual members and the panel as a whole.
14	Participate constructively in the annual review of your performance as Panel Chair.
15	With the Panel Advisor, to participate in the annual performance review of all panel members and completion of summary reports.
16	Meet every 3 months with the agency decision makers, Panel Vice Chair and Adoption Panel Adviser to ensure that panel function is appropriately reviewed and training issues for members identified.
17	Write six monthly and annual report on the panel's work and present when requested to the Board of Trustees.
18	Assist in developing, promoting and monitoring relevant policies and procedures and maintaining the high standards of work in PACT's adoption services.
19	Declare an interest and inform the agency should they have knowledge, in either a personal or professional capacity, of a case under consideration.
20	Take responsibility for and be committed to personal and professional development and keep up to date with law, regulation, guidance, standards, Government policy and research relating to all aspects of the work.

21	Participate in training and development as offered by PACT (at least two days per year).
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Person specification

Professional skills and experience	
1	Experience of chairing complex professional meetings effectively, preferable experience of chairing adoption panels.
2	Demonstrates an appreciation of the purpose and function of the panel and of PACT.
3	Demonstrates has the authority and competence to chair an Adoption Panel meeting with authority, ensuring that all business is covered and that the panel operates in accordance with regulations, guidance and PACT's policies and procedures.
4	Competent at facilitating the active participation of others in contributing to a panel's consideration of cases and recommendations.
5	Ensures any concerns are explored openly and honestly, whilst effectively managing the expression of strongly held views that may be conflicting, helping the panel to reach an informed decision.
6	Identifies key issues, proposes solutions, and clearly communicates them, while confidently raising concerns with PACT and liaising with decision makers and senior managers as needed.
Personal and professional knowledge	
1	Demonstrates an understanding of the adoption process and practice and of the legislative framework for the work of the panel. Has a sound understanding of the statutory requirements and associated guidance in relation to adoption and the work of the panel.
2	Experience, either professionally or personally or both, of the placement of children in adoptive families and of children being cared for away from their birth family.
3	Demonstrates an appreciation of the effect of separation and loss on children and can maintain a child-centered focus.
4	Demonstrates an awareness of the richness of different kinds of families and their potential for meeting children's needs.
5	Broad knowledge, experience and commitment to the Government's agenda for improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.
Professional commitments	
1	Demonstrates a commitment to adoption as a way of meeting a child's needs for permanence, where this appears to be in the child's best interests.

2	Demonstrates a commitment to maintaining contact between children living in adoptive families and their birth families where this appears to be in the child's best interests.
3	Demonstrates an understanding of and a commitment to the requirements of safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare.
4	Demonstrates a commitment to continuous personal development and shows willingness to increase knowledge through reading, discussion and training.
5	Informs the agency at once of any charges, cautions or convictions for any criminal offence or if any criminal proceedings are pending.
6	Declares an interest and informs the Panel Advisor should they have knowledge, in either a personal or professional capacity, of a case under consideration.

Additional skills

1	Excellent interpersonal and listening skills. Can communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. Fluent in written and spoken English.
2	Can absorb, process, analyse, and clearly explain large volumes of complex information.
3	Applies personal and professional insight to contribute thoughtfully to discussions, confidently forming and expressing informed views based on presented information.
4	Demonstrates efficient time management and organisational skills, effectively handling multiple demands and meeting deadlines to ensure the smooth operation of the panel.
5	Ensures high standards of confidentiality, both in terms of individual cases and wider issues.
6	Proficient in use of Microsoft Office.

Diversity Commitment

PACT is a supportive and respectful place where people are passionate about making a positive difference to the lives of women, children, and families from many different backgrounds. We continuously look to progress the ways in which we create families and bring people together and encourage applications from people across all communities. We are committed to ensuring that our people and our services reflect the diversity of the communities we serve and applications from people from under-represented groups are particularly welcomed.

Safeguarding Commitment

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do at PACT. We have robust measures and best practices in place to safeguard and protect the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we take pride in maintaining outstanding safeguarding standards.

We expect all employees, both current and prospective, to uphold and share this commitment and we value everyone's engagement and co-operation with our safeguarding processes to ensure that these are completed without delay.

Anyone joining our team is subject to PACT's safer recruitment pre-appointment enquiries. These enquiries include providing documentation to evidence the right to work in the UK, a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check, overseas police check (if applicable), references covering at least 5 years, a complete previous education and employment history timeline and the completion of mandatory safeguarding training. The DBS check level required for this post is Standard.

All opportunities are based in the UK.