



**refero**  
INNOVATIVE HUMAN  
RESOURCES SOLUTIONS

# The refero Good Referencing Guide

Produced in association with Field Seymour Parkes



Field|Seymour|Parkes  
Solicitors



# Acknowledgements

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## Foreword

Today's businesses are under growing pressure to comply with a burgeoning number of standards and regulations, for example the Sarbanes Oxley Act, whilst at the same time meeting the requirements of shareholders, customers and employees.

HR Managers in particular face many pressures today in their roles, some of which are conflicting. Increasingly required to vet staff, particularly in financial organisations who need to adhere to money laundering regulations, and public sector organisations who bear a sizeable responsibility for public safety, they are at the same time being asked to do more with less due to efficiency drives.

In addition, as more and more people choose contracting and temporary working as a career path, the vetting burden grows larger as those same staff move around more from job to job.

Providing references for leavers, and obtaining them for new recruits, is an added headache for HR Managers, and one which only detracts from the more strategic tasks that really benefit their organisation's performance. Chasing references for new staff is the most time consuming and administration intensive task of all, and so referencing is seen as a necessary evil.

Recruiting the right and properly vetted staff for the role today, however, is essential, and more important than ever. Businesses today face greater risks of litigation from former employees dissatisfied with what they deem to be a "bad reference" or no reference at all, and this makes the former quite wary about issuing references.

But organisations have a moral obligation to issue references for employees, so the process is here to stay.

Employee referencing experts refero, offering unique technology which takes the headache out of the referencing process and relieves the administration burden, may well change the way HR Managers and recruiters view referencing.

Set to become to referencing what Experian is to credit checking, refero has taken the pioneering initiative of launching this practical guide to the referencing process, to assist both HR Managers and their line manager colleagues. We expect the **refero Good Referencing Guide** to be particularly useful for SMEs without a full time HR resource, and we are very happy to endorse it. We hope that you will find it a very useful reference manual.

**James Pritchard**  
**Chairman, London region REC**  
**(Recruitment & Employment Confederation)**  
**and MD, JPA Recruitment**



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# 1 Introduction



# 1. Introduction

Referencing is a very important process within HR and recruitment. Whilst no employer actually has a legal obligation to provide a reference, it is an accepted part of HR good practice and a moral obligation which the majority of employers meet. They do so because employees require an adequate reference to help them secure future employment, and without it their career might suffer in some way.

This guide aims to provide all those directly responsible for supplying and requesting references with the accepted 'dos' and 'don'ts' of the employee referencing process. Since the provision of employee references can, for the non-expert, potentially be a legal minefield, this guide also provides advice on how to minimise the risks involved in providing references, and an update on the legislation and case law impacting the supply and requesting of references.

It also provides information on the latest technology available to allow employers to manage their references in the most effective and efficient way possible, reducing time and cost, and ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Specifically this Good Referencing Guide, written and sponsored by reference experts refero Ltd in association with Field Seymour Parkes solicitors, is aimed at HR managers: to assist them in educating line managers who are dependent upon the process and who can unwittingly, through a lack of awareness, create a liability for their employer. This liability can arise from an employee reference, or equally from a financial reference provided to a mortgage company or future landlord.

The information in this guide was known to be accurate on 20 September 2007. This guide is intended to provide general information only. Specialist legal advice should be sought for specific situations.

# 2 When to provide a reference



## 2. When to provide a reference

Whilst employees do not legally have to provide a reference, they generally do provide them, to help leavers with their future careers and to assist employees and former employees in obtaining loans by verifying salary details.

Once an employer commits to giving a reference, this needs to be prepared with reasonable care, as in preparing the reference the employer owes a duty to both the employee, and the future employer, to make sure the reference content is true, accurate and fair, not misleading, and not motivated by malice. Comments which disparage a person's reputation may amount to defamation.

The employer should adopt a consistent approach, to minimise the risk of any discrimination claim or breach of the implied term of trust and confidence in the employment relationship.

Employees increasingly turn to their employer for salary verification references (for loans such as mortgages) and employment verification references (for Visa purposes and financial checks most popularly).

There are some circumstances under which a reference must be provided i.e. the employer is under a legal obligation to provide one, as follows:

### 2.1 Possible discrimination claim

If it is possible that an employee or former employee can establish a claim for discrimination on grounds of age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief for refusal to provide a reference, or for providing a detrimental reference, a reference should always be provided.

### 2.2 Possible victimisation claim

Where an employee or former employee has brought a discrimination claim against the employer, given evidence or information in relation to such a claim, alleged discrimination or done a protected act under the discrimination laws, then a refusal to provide a reference or giving a detrimental reference may give the individual a separate claim for victimisation (which is a form of discrimination), depending on the reason for such action.

Employers can have a policy in place setting out the situations when a reference will not be given to help defend any claims under 2.1 or 2.2 and to foster a consistent approach by the employer.

## 2.3 Employment regulated by the FSA

There are special rules regarding referencing that apply to employers regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), and these are covered in Section 7 of this guide.

## 2.4 Contractual obligation

Where a compromise agreement contains a term providing that the employer will respond to requests for references with an agreed form reference (see 3.3), then the employer must provide a reference along the lines agreed. Alternatively, an employer may be legally obliged to provide a reference if they usually do so as a matter of custom and practice and could face a breach of contract claim if they do not.

## 2.5 Transfers of Undertakings - TUPE (Protection of Employment)

The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/246)<sup>1</sup> (referred to below as TUPE 2006) are designed to protect the rights of employees in a company/business transfer situation such as:

- Mergers
- Sale of a businesses by sale of assets
- Change of licensee or franchisee
- Gift of a business through the execution of a will
- Contracting out of services
- Changing contractors
- All/part of a sole trader's business/partnership is sold or otherwise transferred.

From 6 April 2006, transferors became obliged to give the transferee written information about the employees who are to transfer and all the associated rights and obligations towards them. This information includes, for example, the identity and age of the employees who will transfer, information contained in the employees' written particulars of employment under section 1 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 and details of any claims that the transferor reasonably believes might be brought against the transferee.

# 3 Types of employee reference



## 3. Types of employee reference

There are four main types of references which employers refer to, namely:

- Open references
- Closed references
- References supplied as part of a compromise agreement
- Mortgage references

### 3.1 Open references

Open references are references which generally contain just the bare facts about a staff member's employment - name, start and finish dates, job role, employment number and number of absences – and are not usually supplied in confidence.

Open references are common practice today, and a matter of policy for many, since employers prefer to provide only the bare facts about a staff member's employment with them which cannot be challenged. This stance is taken to protect themselves from the risk of possible litigation which can arise from delving into 'grey' areas. If a more detailed reference is given, this may be accompanied by a disclaimer of liability.

A risk to employers arises where they state opinion or facts in an employee's references which turn out to be incorrect, inaccurate and/or which they cannot support factually, when they write opinion which is motivated by malice or when they make comment about an employee's suitability for a role which is outside the scope of their limited knowledge of the employee.

### 3.2 Closed references

Closed references are those which are supplied in confidence by a former employer to a new one, and by the nature of their confidentiality generally contain an appraisal of an employee's performance and/or suitability for a role, over and above the basic facts of employment. Because of the fear and risks of litigation outlined in 3.1 above, closed references are becomingly increasingly rare. In fact the majority of employers these days have a policy of not giving closed references, in order to reduce any potential liability.

### 3.3 References supplied as part of a compromise agreement

For an employee leaving an organisation as part of a mutual agreement, for example due to a conduct or performance issue or redundancy, he or she will be very keen to gain an adequate reference to ensure his or her future career is not blighted. For that reason the provision of a reference as part of a compromise agreement can be a very good negotiating tool for employers. Such references should not be overly favourable, or omit to mention key information. It is also advisable to word the reference so that it can be updated should further information come to light.

**Important note:** Employers giving references as part of a compromise agreement should take care to ensure that the reason for leaving cited on the reference of the departing employee (as part of a compromise agreement) does not conflict with the facts or all existing notes on the employee's record. Employers should ensure that an investigation has been carried out, that there are reasonable grounds for establishing misconduct, and that they genuinely believes the employee is guilty. This is to protect themselves in the event of a claim from the departing employee. See 4. Relevant legislation.

### 3.4 Mortgage references

Mortgage references verify an employees' salary or remuneration package and are required by employees and former employees to support applications for loans from finance organisations such as mortgage lenders and loan companies. The call to action for these types of reference is just as onerous to the employer as standard references, and equally as sensitive.

# 4 Relevant legislation



## 4. Relevant legislation

As stated in the Introduction to this guide, there is no general legal obligation on employers to provide references, except they should be seriously considered in the circumstances set out at Section 2. It is also good practice to provide a reference when a manager or other person in authority has already told the employee that a reference will be provided.

There are various pieces of legislation which you need to be aware of when managing and/or preparing references, as well as case law outcomes which suggest how a court of law would view certain circumstances around references when considering future cases. The most significant is the Data Protection Act 1998.

### 4.1 Data Protection Act 1998

When the Data Protection Act (DPA) was updated in 1998 (and came into force in March 2000) the scope was extended to include employee references for the first time, including those stored in paper format. This means employee references have to be managed according to the principles of the Data Protection Act, as they include "personal data".

The DPA also imposes a duty on employers to provide access to employment references held on file to employees who request them. This right of access applies to references that have been supplied by third parties. Employees therefore have a right to see references about them, but only in retrospect once they have been passed to another company. An employer may also have grounds to refuse a request for access to an employment reference, if an express assurance of confidentiality was provided to the reference creator.

Where it is unclear whether information in a reference is known to the individual or confidential, the employer should contact the referee and check whether they object to the reference being provided. If it is reasonable in all the circumstances to comply with the request without the employee's consent, then the employer must disclose it. Further guidance can be obtained from the Information Commissioner regarding the factors to take into account when considering whether it is reasonable to comply with a request. These include:

- Any assurance of confidentiality given to the referee
- Any relevant reasons the referee gives for withholding consent
- The potential or actual effect of the reference on the individual (e.g. they have been prevented from taking up the job)
- The fact that a reference must be true and accurate and an individual cannot challenge this if he has not seen it
- Any risk of violence or intimidation towards the referee

#### 4.1.1 Ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act

To ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 employee references must be managed according to eight principles of good practice, i.e. the data must be:

1. Fairly and lawfully processed - to be processed fairly and lawfully, employees must agree to reference data being processed and held on them, and the reference data must be necessary for the effective operation of the business.
2. Processed for limited purposes
3. Adequate, relevant and not excessive
4. Accurate
5. Not kept for longer than is necessary
6. Processed in accordance with the employee's rights
7. Secure
8. Not transferred to countries without adequate Data Protection laws

#### 4.1.2 Sensitive information

Information about health is sensitive personal data under the DPA. Employers can only disclose such data in very limited circumstances, and always with the employee's express consent. Information regarding the number of days' sickness absence an employee has had during the last year should not involve disclosing any sensitive personal data. However, requests for information relating to the reasons for such absence should only be provided after the relevant employee has seen and approved the proposed response.

#### 4.1.3 What are the risks of non compliance?

Non-compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 can result in a fine of up to £5,000 in the Magistrates Court and an unlimited fine in the Crown Court. Employers will be liable for the contents of a reference given by the organisation but not for one given by an individual in their personal capacity.

## 4.2 Employment Practices Code

The Employment Practices Code published by the Information Commissioner will also apply. This recommends:

- Drafting and circulating to employees a clear policy regarding which employees can provide references on behalf of your organisation and outlining the circumstances in which they can do so
- Not providing a confidential reference about a worker unless you are certain that the worker agrees to this step

## 4.3 Case law

There are a number of case outcomes which inform the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of employee references, guiding us further as to how they should be created and managed. If an inaccurate reference is given, the person and/or organisation giving the reference can be sued for negligence.

N.B. The majority of cases are settled out of court, costing employers thousands in "quiet" settlements.

The most significant case outcomes in recent years, and those which have made employers extremely cautious about providing anything other than an open (basic) reference, include:

### 4.3.1 Spring vs Guardian Assurance (1994)

Mr Spring was seeking another job in financial services, but, due to the reference provided by his former employer, he could not get the necessary registration with the Financial Services Authority. The employee who wrote the reference believed the comments he made to be true, but he was found to be negligent in preparing the reference as the Court found that a simple check would have shown them to be false.

Lord Woolf stated that "references should be based on facts revealed after making those reasonably careful enquiries which, in the circumstances, a reasonably careful employer would make."

**Note: Managers and HR staff should take care in preparing references, making sure that the facts included are correct and can be substantiated.**

### 4.3.2 Coote vs Granada Hospitality Ltd (1998)

Refusal to supply a reference by Granada was deemed ancillary to allegations of discrimination.

**Note: Managers and HR staff should always provide a reference where they suspect the employee may allege discrimination of some kind.**

### 4.3.3 Bartholomew vs London Borough of Hackney (1999)

Developing the principle in the Spring case, the Court of Appeal held that the employer had not acted in breach of its duty of care to the employee by providing a reference which referred to disciplinary proceedings pending when severance terms were agreed. The employer would have breached its duty to the prospective employer to provide a reference that was not unfair or misleading if such details had been omitted. The court then made three statements of general principle regarding employee references:

- Employers have a duty to ensure that references are true, accurate and fair in substance

- Employers do not have a duty to be full and comprehensive with the reference content
- When looking at the factual accuracy of a reference and the impression it gives, the reference must not be broken down into individual sentences but considered as a whole to ensure that it is not misleading

**Note: Employers are not obliged to provide more than the basic facts regarding a staff member's employment with their organisation. However, they must ensure these facts are accurate, and combined give a true and fair impression of the individual to which they refer.**

#### 4.3.4 Cox vs Sun Alliance Life Ltd (2001)

Sun Alliance was deemed to have provided an unfair reference for Mr Cox because a) it implied he had been sacked for taking bribes when in fact he had resigned with compensation and b) it had agreed to provide a neutral reference as part of a compromise agreement. The 'unfair' reference was provided over the phone, in the form of a 'quiet word in the new employer's ear' which in fact ended Mr Cox's career. The Court of Appeal was unimpressed and made it clear that as far as references are concerned, there is no such thing as an 'off the record' chat.

#### 4.3.5 Lawton vs BOC Transfield Ltd (1987)

In this case it was said that a reference concentrating on the excellent timekeeping of an otherwise thoroughly incompetent employee could be actionable as a reference containing incorrect statements. The judge stated that the test was whether a reasonably prudent employer, on the facts as found, would have expressed the opinions stated in the reference.

Note: HR staff and line managers should not leave out facts if in doing so they produce a reference that could be construed as misleading. Liability may arise from what is said in a reference, but also from what is not said.

#### 4.3.6 Kidd vs Axa Equity and Law Life Assurance Society (2000)

The court held there is no obligation on the employer to provide any detail in the reference or for it to be comprehensive. However, it must not give a misleading impression.

#### 4.3.7 TSB Bank Plc vs Harris (2000)

The court held that there was a breach of the implied duty to take care when preparing the reference as the bank had referred in the reference to complaints made against the employee on which she had not had the opportunity to comment. The employee could resign and claim constructive unfair dismissal in these circumstances.

# 5 'Dos' and 'Don'ts'



## 5. 'Dos' and 'Don'ts'

### 5.1 Seeking references

#### 'Dos'

- DO think carefully before deciding to employ an applicant without taking up references
- DO seek a minimum of two employment references for potential employees
- DO establish a template (or pro-forma) for information that you will issue (or request) in a reference
- DO provide the job title and job description to past employers when requesting references, to allow them to relate their comments to the work the employee will be required to do in his or her new role
- DO make sure any provisional offer of employment is subject to references received being deemed satisfactory (to you) - otherwise in the event that you receive an unsatisfactory reference, you will not be able to withdraw your offer without a breach of contract
- DO provide for the job offer or employment contract to terminate if an unsatisfactory reference is received after an employee has started work to avoid having to pay the employee for his notice period
- DO look for inconsistencies between any information given by the candidate at interview and the contents of the reference
- DO give candidates an opportunity to explain any discrepancies highlighted between information gathered from CV/interviews and references received
- DO proceed cautiously before taking any action based on information received about a potential employee's health, especially if he/she may have a disability. Consider discussing any concerns with the applicant and suggest reasonable adjustments to the job/workplace if they are disabled for the purposes of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995

#### 'Don'ts'

- DON'T start a new employee before satisfactory references have been received, particularly if your organisation is in a sector where additional rules apply (e.g. Financial Services). Once an employee has started work they have the same contractual entitlements as any other employee
- DON'T rely purely on references in assessing the suitability of an applicant. It is good practice to carry out a proper assessment of suitability for the role during the selection process

## 5.2 Supplying references

### Do's

- DO have a policy for providing references, whether they be given orally over the telephone or in writing, including who can provide references, and ensure that it is applied consistently
- DO communicate your policy for providing references to all employees when they join the organisation
- DO establish a template (or pro-forma) for information that you will issue (or request) in a reference
- DO provide a reference in writing, to reduce the scope for misinterpretation of what you have said, and allow you time to check the facts
- DO take care in providing a reference - check the facts, make sure you can back them up if required, and ensure that overall the reference is true, accurate, fair, balanced and not motivated by malice
- DO set the parameters within which a reference is provided e.g. by stating your level of knowledge of, or experience of working with, the employee, especially where the employee is taking up a different role
- DO include a reasonable disclaimer in any reference issued i.e. 'This is a reference given in strictest confidence and without legal responsibility.' Be aware that this disclaimer will only be effective (under the Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977) if it is reasonable and will only be effective in relation to a claim for negligent misstatement. It will not limit your legal liability if the reference is proven to be inaccurate and/or misleading, but it may deter litigation
- DO gain the consent of the individual before putting 'sensitive' data in a reference i.e. information about the individual's age, race, ethnicity, political opinions, trade union membership, religious beliefs, convictions or alleged offences, sex life or health)
- DO consider discussing with the employee any information you feel obliged to provide in his or her reference which you believe will be viewed in a negative light by a future employer (this gives the employee the chance to seek another referee)
- DO reserve the right to amend the reference if any relevant information subsequently comes to light. If only a brief reference is provided with dates and role, explain that this is your organisation's policy
- DO ensure that comments on performance are not related to a disability
- DO mark the reference "Private & Confidential – Addressee Only"

## Supplying references

### 'Don'ts'

- DON'T give references over the phone or on the spot (particularly if they differ from an agreed written reference). Give yourself time to think and to check facts, and avoid being misquoted or misconstrued
- DON'T give references 'off-the-record', as confidential comments made in conversation or over the phone about an employee may still be admissible in a court of law (though harder to prove)
- DON'T give a false, unproven statement in a reference that damages or could damage the reputation of the individual concerned.
- DON'T give a reference that gives an overall unfair impression of the individual concerned (i.e. it should not be misleading or over generous) as the author has a duty of care to both the employee and the future employer)
- DON'T give personal (character) references on behalf of your organisation (i.e. by writing them on your employer's headed paper)
- DON'T refuse to supply a reference for an employee if it is possible that the employee may bring discrimination proceedings against you
- DON'T provide a good or inaccurate reference for an employee who has been dismissed on performance or conduct grounds. In addition to the potential liability issues, this will create inconsistency of evidence as to the reason for dismissal should you be requested to go before an Employment Tribunal
- DON'T write a reference for an employee of whom you have limited knowledge of the facts relating to the employee's service
- DON'T provide a poor reference motivated by malice (for example to prevent the employee moving on)
- DON'T put anything negative in a reference that does not concur with the employee's employment and appraisal notes and which has not previously been raised with the employee
- DON'T mention a disciplinary relating to the individual concerned in a reference - unless it has been investigated in full, concluded, and the facts proven
- DON'T give out details of sickness absence in a reference, other than the number of days taken, unless given permission to do so by the employee concerned
- DON'T assume that a reference will remain confidential (under the DPA 1998 employees can request access to references their employer has received from third parties)

## 5.3 Managing reference data

### 'Do's'

- DO have a policy for managing reference data, including references for loans which require verification of salary
- DO communicate your policy for managing references to all employees when they join the organisation
- DO comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 as regards the management of reference data (see 4.1). Using an electronic reference data management system can help, including for the management of references which require salary verification e.g. mortgages and loans. See 8. The role of technology in the referencing process
- DO provide access for employees to references received by third parties and written about them, as laid out by the Data Protection Act, unless there is a very good reason for not doing so
- DO provide access to individuals to references about them, where they are received from third parties, within 40 days
- DO ensure that reference data cannot be amended or destroyed by individuals having access to data held about them
- DO gain the consent of the individual the reference is about, particularly when it concerns a mortgage reference (salary verification details), before providing access to the person's details (or deny access to the reference details if consent is denied or cannot be obtained)
- DO audit the reference data you hold at least once a year, and destroy (delete) any reference data which is out-of-date and/or serves no purpose for your organisation
- DO manage your reference data in a secure, central location, ideally electronically, to prevent duplication, preserve reference quality, and maximise efficiency
- DO gain written consent for holding employees' reference data on file (by means of the application form and the contract of employment)
- DO establish a procedure by which employees can access reference data held about them
- DO ensure your HR department has a copy of all references supplied (or preferably store all references on a single, central system)
- DO ensure adequate security is in place to protect reference data (ideally by using a secure, digital reference management system with multiple layers of encryption)

### 'Don'ts'

- DON'T reveal the identity of individuals other than the person whom the reference is about, when giving access to employees to references held on file about them
- DON'T transfer reference data outside of the EU (unless the country to which the data is sent ensures an adequate level of protection for personal data)
- DON'T charge more than £10 for each access by the employee to reference data

# 6 References in the financial services sector



## 6. References in the financial services sector

It has been stated earlier in this guide (see 1. Introduction and 2. When to provide a reference) that employers are not obliged to provide references. However some sectors of businesses have rules inferred on them by their industry regulators which make the request and supply of references more formal and subject to certain rules.

In the financial services sector, for example, the financial services regulator, the Financial Services Authority (FSA), lays down strict codes of conduct regarding the recruitment of "fit and proper" employees into controlled functions (roles where staff sell financial services or products to the general public or deal with compliance or legal tasks) which includes the supply and requesting of references.

When assessing whether or not a person is fit and proper, the FSA considers: honesty, integrity and reputation; competence and capability and financial soundness. An employer must notify the FSA at any time if it has information that may be relevant to a person being assessed as "fit and proper" to carry out a "controlled function" or if they cease to perform that function so that the FSA can update their records.

Under the FSA codes regarding recruitment practice it is forbidden, for example, to start new employees in controlled roles before satisfactory references have been received. This is because of the potential liability to the public and other third parties that could result from taking on someone whose references and/or background information turns out to be a cause for concern and that concern turns out to be justified. The former employer is required to provide all relevant information of which it is aware as soon as is reasonably practicable.

**For details of the rules around referencing, supplementary to the information given here, for organisations regulated by the FSA, please visit [www.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.fsa.gov.uk) or tel: 020 7066 1000.**

# 7 References for public sector workers



## 7. References for public sector workers

The potential liability to an organisation providing public sectors services is huge, particularly when its workers are providing services to children or vulnerable adults. For this reason background checking in the public sector is much more rigorous than in other types of organisation.

Bear in mind also the gender equality duty which applies to all public sector bodies (which are defined widely) and requires them to promote equality between men and women and to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment.

As well as taking up references, organisations looking to recruit staff who deal with the public will seek CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) and POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) checks as appropriate.

Reference checking is equally rigorous where staff are being recruited to work in environments where public safety and/or security is paramount e.g. staff for airports, airlines and military/defence environments.

Many of the people working in these sectors are contract workers which need to be recruited quickly. Speed is of the essence to fill the roles and ensure continuity of service.

One of the benefits of using a secure, central reference data management system is that you can obtain references from former employers much quicker than with traditional paper-based systems. Furthermore the increased quality control helps to combat reference fraud and reduce legal liability.

**For more information visit [www.refero.co.uk](http://www.refero.co.uk)**

# 8

## The role of technology in employee referencing

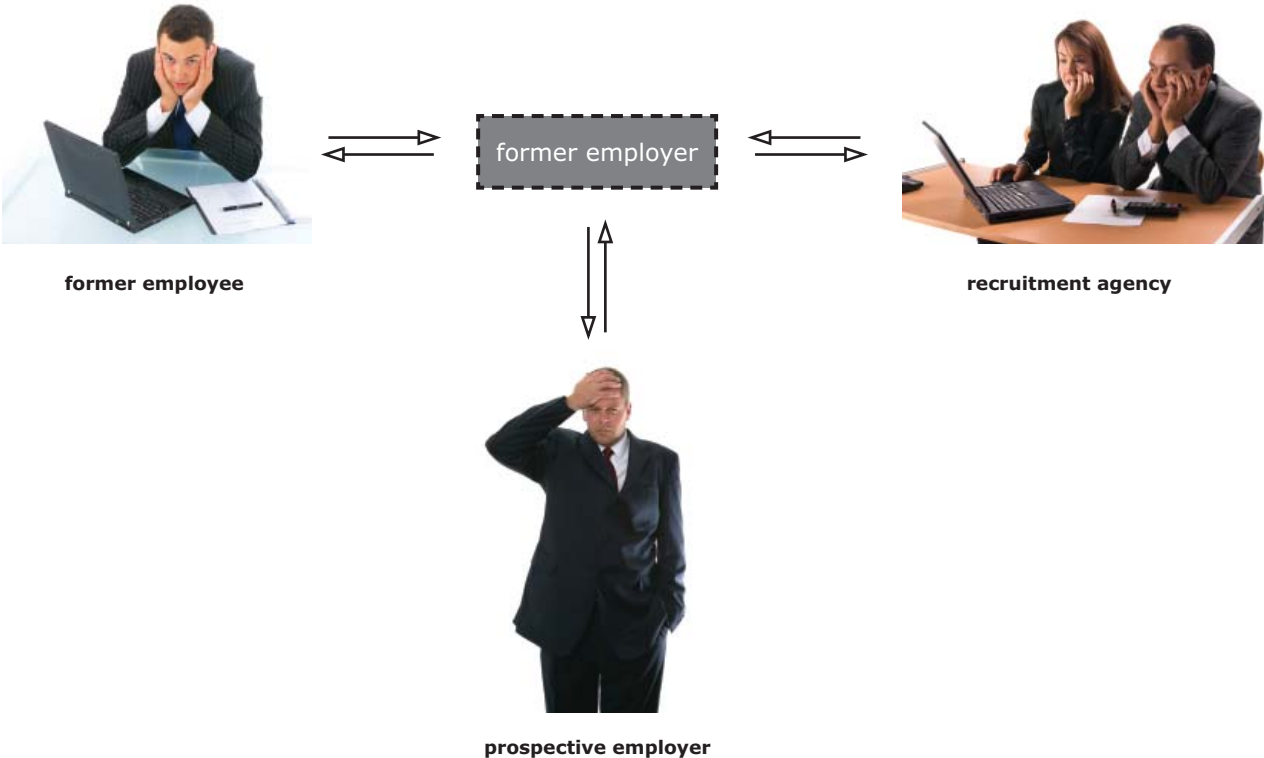


# 8. The role of technology in employee referencing

In recent years paper-based processes for managing references have been replaced by secure digital systems. This is because of the potential to speed up the time taken to provide, and access, references, offering significant time and cost savings to all parties, and to reduce legal liability and reference fraud through increased quality control.

Process using the usual paper- and phone-based systems

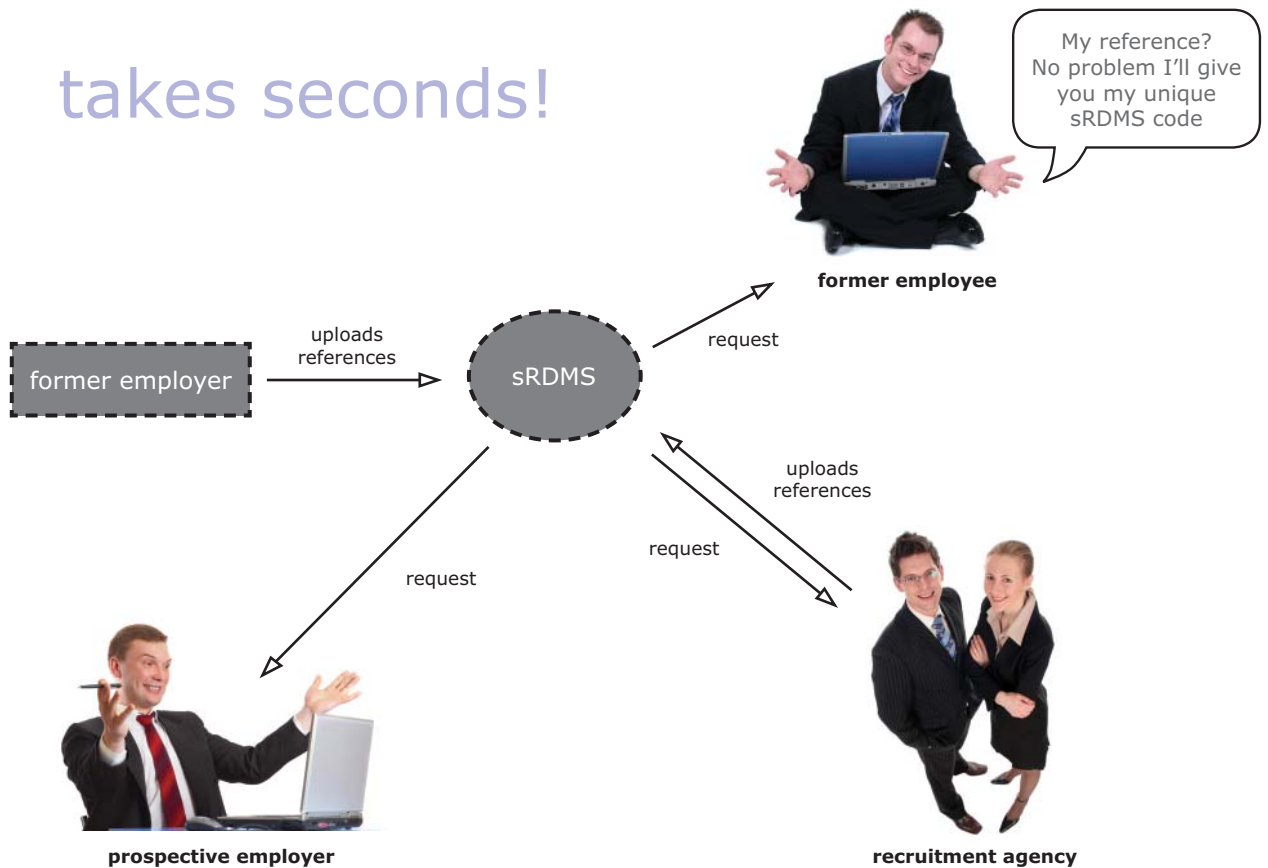
takes days/weeks



the refero sRDMS will save you time and money

Process using centralised, platform-independent electronic referencing

takes seconds!



Using a secure digital system also helps you to stay compliant with the Data Protection Act regarding the management of reference data and improves quality control thus reducing your potential legal liability. A central electronic process for employee references also reduces reference fraud, important because a significant number of applicants are estimated to provide misleading reference information, and allows HR and recruitment administrative staff to focus on value-add tasks.

**For more information visit [www.refero.co.uk](http://www.refero.co.uk)**

# 9 About refero



## 9. About refero

refero is the company behind a revolution in employee referencing, offering their unrivalled, secure Reference Data Management System (sRDMS), accessible anytime anywhere via the Web.

The refero sRDMS saves organisations time and money, by providing a centralised and efficient method for the management of reference data internally and speeding up the time taken to obtain references. It allows references to be considered at the start of the recruitment process (because they are easy to access and readily available via the sRDMS), reduces the risk of reference fraud (because only bona fide references from vetted companies are allowed on to the system) and reduces exposure to legal liability (through the improved quality control that it encourages).

refero also reduces the demand on the HR department, as departing employees leave with a unique sRDMS access code for their references which they can pass on to interested employers, recruiters and financial services companies. For large employers wishing to outsource the entire process of supplying leaver references, refero offers an outsourced solution which saves employers time and money and frees their time to focus on value-add tasks.

Working as IT contractors during the 1990s and early 2000s, refero's management team experienced first hand the inefficiency, and opportunity, in the referencing process. Today refero has built substantially on that first hand knowledge. Its staff are experts in the referencing process, and a formidable force in applying technology to HR challenges. They have substantial experience in the IT, legal and accounting industries in particular, meaning they understand how the referencing process can impact business, and the how employment law impacts the referencing process.

The early success of the sRDMS is such that the name "refero" will become to referencing what Experian is to credit checking.

By 2009, all employee references are expected to carry the "sRDMS Verified Reference" kite mark of quality.

**For more information visit [www.refero.co.uk](http://www.refero.co.uk)**



# 10 About Field Seymour Parkes



## 10. About Field Seymour Parkes

Field Seymour Parkes is a full service legal practice, offering a comprehensive range of expert commercial and private legal services to organisations and individuals alike throughout the United Kingdom.

In an often over-complicated world, our philosophy is simple and captured by our core values. Alongside commitment and enthusiasm, the hallmark of our practice is the way in which we put the client at the centre of everything we do and bring clarity even to the most complex solutions.

### The Employment Law Group at Field Seymour Parkes

The Employment Law Group believes in working in partnership with your business to provide the type of assistance that is tailored to your business needs. This approach, combined with flexible fee arrangements, means that our employment group is able to offer you the best of both worlds: an expert service that does not break the bank.

Our employment lawyers have considerable experience in advising companies and individuals on the full range of employment matters ranging from litigation, contract and policy reviews to TUPE transfers, redundancies and ad hoc telephone advice.

We recognise the difficult and sensitive nature of the issues that can arise for both employers and employees and we pride ourselves on finding the appropriate solutions for each situation.

**For more information visit [www.fieldseymourparkes.co.uk](http://www.fieldseymourparkes.co.uk)**





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