

Child Safe Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy

Purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to make sure that staff responsible for recruitment, induction and training of staff and volunteers at Gloucester Arts and Cultural Council Inc (GACCI) uphold our child safe recruitment, induction and training practices.

The policy sets out the processes for child safe recruitment of staff and volunteers for any child-related roles. The policy also includes the induction process for new recruits and volunteers, and further training that may be required at times for all staff, including volunteers. This is to make sure they continue to have the required skills to prevent risk of harm to children.

Who the policy is for

This policy is for staff undertaking recruitment of staff or volunteers for child-related roles.

The child safe recruitment and induction processes set out in this policy must be applied to anyone we are considering for a child-related role at Enter your organisation's name.

This includes roles that involve any of the following:

- supervising children
- being alone with children or engaging with them in a way that is not observed or monitored
- taking part in activities with children away from the organisation's usual location
- having access (online or paper based) to a child's or children's personal and/or confidential information
- transporting children
- having any other type of unmonitored contact with children.

Processes for child safe recruitment for staff and volunteers

Employees

1. Include our commitment to child safety in our advertising

Our job advertisements include details about our organisation's commitment to being child safe. We let potential staff members know at the outset that we uphold children's rights and take implementation of the Child Safe Standards seriously, and that everyone who works with children must have a cleared Working with Children Check. We provide a link in the job ad to our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.

2. Conduct a robust interview process for new employees

At GACCI we conduct a robust interview process. This involves:

- a. **Setting up an interview panel:** we decide who will take part in the selection process to help pre-assess the applicants and conduct the interviews

- b. **Short-listing:** we pre-assess applicants' suitability to work with children and develop a short list
- c. **Having the interview:** we decide on the questions we want to ask. For child-related roles, questions will generally focus on the applicants' experience working in previous child-related roles
- d. **Assessing candidates and making the final selection:** the panel discuss the interviews and make notes on strengths and weaknesses to help them decide on the best candidate.

See **Appendix A** for a template to support the interview process.

3. Check references

Each candidate must provide the details of two referees.

At least one of the referees should be someone from their most recent role.

Referees should have directly supervised or managed the applicant in a professional capacity.

If the applicant has never worked before or has just left school, character references may be acceptable. However, these should not be from family members or be given as much weight as professional references.

We ask each referee whether they see any issues with the applicant working with children.

See **Appendix B** for a template to support the reference checking process.

4. Screen and verify applicant's Working with Children Check

In NSW all adult workers in child-related work, whether paid or unpaid, must hold a WWCC clearance or a current application for a Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance (unless they are subject to an exemption).

Employers have legal obligations around working with children. It is against the law to engage anyone in child-related work without a WWCC. If a worker or volunteer requires a WWCC, there are actions our organisation must take.

Before commencing employment, we make sure the applicant has a cleared WWCC and we verify it on the OCG's website.

We keep records for each verified worker, including:

1. Full name
2. Date of birth
3. WWCC number
4. Verification date
5. Verification outcome
6. Expiry date of WWCC
7. Whether the worker is in paid or volunteer work.

We continue to monitor and act to:

- keep all workers and volunteers' WWCC details up to date
- remind employees to renew which they can do up to 3 months before their WWCC expires, and
- remove anyone whose WWCC status is barred, interim barred, whose WWCC cannot be found or has expired from child-related work. We can only employ people who have an Application number or WWCC clearance in child-related work.

1. Undertake a broader national criminal history check or other checks for specific roles or circumstances

A police check (broader national criminal history check) may also be required for some applicants. This includes applicants who have spent more than 6 months overseas in their previous role.

An NDIS Worker Check may also be required for some applicants.

Volunteer screening

Before commencing, volunteers working or interacting directly with children in our organisation must also have a cleared and verified Working with Children Check, unless they are exempted. This should follow the processes set out above for new employees.

Where possible, we undertake an informal interview with new volunteers, as part of our screening process. This should follow the general principles outlined above for employees.

If we are unable to conduct an interview, we ask volunteers to fill out a child safe questionnaire before they are permitted to work with children. This asks them to describe their beliefs and values in relation to working with children, and what they understand about being a child safe organisation.

Volunteers should also provide at least one referee – ideally someone who has worked with them in a previous role (paid or unpaid). We check with the referee whether they have any issues with the person working with children.

What to do if our organisation is notified that someone is barred from working with children

It is an offence to allow a barred person to work with children and they must be removed from child-related work.

A person is barred from working with children if the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) has determined that the person is a risk to working with children.

When the OCG bars a person in our organisation from working with children, they will contact the person registered as our 'contact person' when we initially registered as an employer in the WWCC system. The purpose of the initial contact is to determine whether the worker is currently working in our organisation, and whether they are working with children.

It is important that we respond to this request promptly and accurately.

If we have confirmed that the worker is working with children in our organisation, **the OCG will issue a formal written notification** advising us to remove the worker from working with children.

Once this has been received, we need to take immediate action and respond to the OCG in writing, confirming that the worker has been removed from working with children.

A record must be kept of our actions. This information should be treated confidentially and only the people in the organisation who need to know this should be advised.

More information on how to manage a barred worker can be found in the OCG's [Child Safe Recruitment and Working with Children Check handbook](#) and on [the OCG website](#).

Child safe induction

At GACCI we recognise that making sure a staff member or volunteer is safe and suitable to work with children is an ongoing process. Inductions for staff and volunteers include:

- an overview of all our child safe documents, including our Child Safe Code of Conduct (to be read and signed), the Child Safe Risk Management Plan and our Child Safe Reporting Policy,

ensuring that that new staff and volunteers are advised of their reporting obligations and how to identify and raise a child safety concern

- a tour of our premises explaining any physical risks new recruits should be aware of (which are included in our Child Safe Risk Management Plan) and relevant behaviours on site as set out in the our Code of Conduct, including the use of personal devices
- ensuring new recruits complete required child safe training (see below), and
- monitoring and supervision.

We support new recruits and volunteers with appropriate instruction and feedback when needed, including regular oversight as they become familiar with the new role.

There is also a [6-month probationary period – adjust to suit your organisation or for temporary roles] for all workers to make sure they are a good fit with our organisation.

Child safe training

New staff and volunteers should complete required child safe training. We encourage everyone to do introductory child safe training through the OCG.

Staff and volunteers also receive ongoing child safe training. We encourage everyone to do additional child safe training through the OCG, dependent on their role in the organisation. We also ask staff and volunteers to complete Child Safe eLearning - Keeping children safe in organisations on the OCG's website.

Child Safe Code of Conduct review

Staff and volunteers are told when we are reviewing our child safe policies and we invite them to contribute. When our Child Safe Code of Conduct is reviewed and updated, staff and volunteers must be asked to re-read and sign it. Signed copies should be kept on file.

Next review date

The GACCI committee will review this policy annually at the GACCI AGM unless there are any incidents, in which case it will be reviewed immediately.
