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Minimum standards for pre-employment

Minimum standards for pre-employment are structured in two parts into minimum standards for pre-employment and the minimum standards process to be followed.

Minimum standards for pre-employment verification

Pre-employment verification is vital to a successful recruitment process. Managers need to be aware of a number of legal issues that can arise if a process is not followed and the minimum standards are not adhered to. A hiring manager must ensure that the following can be confirmed (as appropriate):

- legal entitlement to work in New Zealand at the University in the role offered
- qualifications
- previous experience and employment history
- any relevant prior or pending convictions
- other pre-employment checks such as credit and bankruptcy checks (if required for the role)
- licences, certificate, registrations, and/or memberships necessary to carry out the required duties.

All information collected must be appropriate for the role. The qualifications and qualities that are necessary for the functions of the role must be verified.

Qualifications, experience and appropriate licences, certificates, registrations, and/or memberships

Qualifications, experience and appropriate licences, certificates, registrations, and memberships can easily be verified. Having relevant qualifications and experience is vital to the applicant being able to carry out the work.

Immigration status

A hiring manager has responsibility to confirm the applicant is entitled to work in New Zealand and for the University in the role offered and applicants themselves need to ensure that their immigration visa is the correct one. It is an offence to employ a person who is not entitled to work in New Zealand for the University in the role offered.

The University must also hold a tax code declaration signed by the appointee (new employee). The declaration states that the individual is able to undertake the work the tax code declaration relates to and that they are therefore eligible to work in New Zealand as per the Immigration Act 2009.

An offer of employment may need to be made in advance to enable a valid work, student or resident visa to be applied for. This may occur provided the relevant visa is obtained and verified prior to employment commencing.

Note: if the applicant intends to work under a student visa, their student status will affect how many hours the person is permitted to work while studying.

Prior and pending convictions

The hiring manager must ensure that questions regarding prior convictions and pending criminal charges are asked for a lawful purpose and are relevant to the employment process and the specific role.

A previous conviction can be considered and is not a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Human Rights Act 1993. The hiring manager must ensure that the information sought complies with the privacy principles applicable to collecting personal information from individuals.

The hiring manager must also take into account the effect of the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004. Applicants do not have to reveal their convictions if they have not been convicted in the past seven years. However, this Act does not apply to convictions for specified offences (e.g. sexual offences), or convictions that resulted in a custodial sentence.

Misrepresentation

If the applicant provides misleading information to the hiring manager, and the University employs them, the hiring manager may take action that may include termination of the person's employment. Such misrepresentation goes to the heart of the trust and confidence required in the employment relationship.

Misrepresentation deprives the employer of the opportunity to make enquiries into the nature and circumstance of convictions or to judge the applicant appropriately on the basis of their qualifications and claimed experience.

Personal data collection and verification

Personal information relating to an individual may be collected and used as set out in the letter of offer and the [University's Privacy Notice](#). Date of birth must be collected for all new staff as part of the recruitment process. Reliable matching of identity records requires a valid date of birth and the identity document must be sighted and the type of document recorded and a copy provided for HR file purposes. The purpose of this is to ensure legal names and other identifying data are reliable and that the person is who they say they are.

Process to follow for minimum standards for pre-employment verification

Reference checks for academic staff

Three written reference checks must be completed for all academic appointments in advance of the selection interview process. At least one of these should be from the most recent place of employment or study and, if at all possible, the preferred candidate's manager/supervisor.

Use the [request for written reference letter template \(Word\)](#) and send the requests to the candidate's nominated referees. The reference checks should validate the experience as stated in the CV and letter of application. The checks should confirm publications, either by reputation/knowledge of and/or by checking and reading published abstracts. If areas of concern emerge these should be followed up with verbal reference checks and relevant assessment testing.

Reference checks for professional staff

Verbal reference checks must be completed for all professional staff appointments. When a preferred candidate has been identified, preferably three, but as a minimum two reference checks should be completed with the preferred candidate's nominated referees. One should be from the most recent place of employment and, if at all possible, the preferred candidate's manager.

Use the [verbal reference check template \(Word\)](#) as a guide for your reference checks. The reference checks should validate the experience as stated in the CV and letter of application. This template can be tailored to address any areas of concern or potential risks that may have been identified during the interview process and relevant assessment testing of the preferred candidate may also be requested.

Note: If the preferred candidate has previously worked at the University, or is currently employed by the University, you can request a copy of their personal file from HR.

Reference checks should be kept and held on the personal file for all successful applicants. If reference checks were also carried out for unsuccessful applicants, that information should be held by the hiring manager until no longer administratively required (a general rule might be for up to three months) and then should be destroyed.

Verification of qualifications, licences, certificates, registration, and memberships

All preferred candidates must provide original or certified copies of their qualifications, licences, certificates, registrations or memberships. Hiring managers are responsible for ensuring this happens.

Examples of these documents may be for roles that require a specific licence (e.g. driver's licence); certificate (e.g. first aid); registration (e.g. nursing or teaching registration); or membership (e.g. of a particular professional body).

Any offer of employment for roles that have specific requirements must be made subject to verification of required documents as described above and will be copied for the employee's personal file.

If a new or potential employee's qualifications are not able to be verified, and where these qualifications are a requirement of the role, the University must reserve the right to rescind any offer of employment that may have been made. If the successful candidate is waiting on a degree or qualification to be conferred, any offer of employment made should be conditional on the degree or qualification being obtained and conferred.

Personal data verification for all successful applicants

All successful applicants must provide acceptable proof of identity via Oracle Human Capital Management (HCM) and this must be sighted and copied for the human resources personal file. For New Zealand citizens, a passport is the preferred proof of identity. However, if the person does not have a passport, the following alternative documents would be acceptable


- New Zealand birth certificate
- New Zealand driver licence

If the work, or aspects of the work, are covered by the Children's Act 2014, two forms of identity are required, as follows:

- birth certificate **or** passport; **and**
- driver licence **or** student ID card

For non-New Zealand citizens, the document provided **must** be a passport and when the passport is sighted a check must be made at the time for the validity of the work, student or resident visa by the hiring manager to ensure eligibility to be able to work in New Zealand at the University in the role offered.

Criminal history checks

The [Ministry of Justice](#)  holds information in relation to a person's criminal history, including traffic convictions that have been processed through the justice system. This contains information on convictions and sentencing from court appearances.


Criminal history checks are mandatory for new employees currently living in New Zealand (or is a New Zealand living overseas) and where employment is for more than six months.

The candidate's consent is required before access is obtained to criminal conviction records. The letter of offer should outline the requirement for a pre-employment check. When the letter of offer has been accepted send an email to contacthr@vuw.ac.nz with the employees following details:

- **full name**
- **email address**
- **cell phone number**
- **name of the department/school**

When the team has this information a criminal history check will be processed through the University's external pre-employment check provider.

Police vetting

The [New Zealand Police](#)  processes requests for organisations that deal with the care of others (defined as younger, older and more vulnerable persons). Requests for police checks must be made when recruiting staff whose work, or aspects of their work, is covered by the Children's Act 2014. This must be done via a pre-approved arrangement with the New Zealand Police.

There are currently a number of pre-approved Victoria University of Wellington units that are able to request police checks for staff who work within those areas, including Human Resources. If you are one of the approved university agents processing New Zealand Police Vetting checks, please provide a copy of the report to contacthr@vuw.ac.nz for noting and filing on the employee file.

The police may 'red stamp' and recommend via this process that a person does not have unsupervised access to children, young people or the more vulnerable members of society.

Police check information must be securely kept as agreed with the police, with access by approved staff only as authorised by the police. Such information is not contained within the human resources personal files.

Roles that require satisfactory police vetting checks include, but are not be limited to, all early childhood services staff and halls of residence staff including residential advisers, and roles that requires safety checking to be carried out in accordance with the Children's Act 2014. An adverse check may impact on an individual's suitability for a role within the University and all offers of employment should be subject to checks being received that are satisfactory to the University.

Credit, bankruptcy and fraud checks

Roles that require a satisfactory credit, bankruptcy and fraud check include, but are not limited to, Senior Leadership Team members, directors of Central Service Units, finance and payroll staff and staff who have access to financial and other sensitive information. Credit worthiness of a potential candidate includes details of litigation, court judgements, fraud and bankruptcy. Email contacthr@vuw.ac.nz to arrange for these checks to be done through the University's external provider of checking services.

The candidate's consent is required before access is obtained to credit, bankruptcy and fraud records. The letter of offer should outline the requirement for a pre-employment check. When the letter of offer has been accepted send an email to contacthr@vuw.ac.nz with the employees following details:

- **full name**
- **email address**
- **cell phone number**
- **name of the department/school**

When the team has this information a credit, bankruptcy and fraud check will be processed through the University's external pre-employment check provider.

An adverse check may impact on an individual's suitability for a role within the University and all offers of employment should be subject to checks being received that are satisfactory to the University.

Application form candidate declarations

The Victoria University of Wellington [application for employment and declaration form \(Word\)](#), requires candidates to declare information that is then used to assess a candidate's suitability for employment into a particular role. Such declarations include eligibility to work in New Zealand, health, criminal charges and convictions (prior and pending) and whether they have worked at the University before. Other declarations may be added from time to time.

It is important to assess the validity of the declarations as part of the recruitment process. Should a candidate accept a role, but later be found to have been dishonest in the provision, or non-provision, of accurate information, then the employment agreement may be put at risk. Managers will consider whether the trust and confidence in the employment relationship has changed detrimentally as a result and may only take appropriate action in consultation with Human Resources.

- All applicants to be interviewed must have completed an online application form for the vacancy. This includes applicants presented by recruitment agencies for consideration.
- The successful candidate's application form is retained within Oracle HCM and the following must be filed on the candidate's personal file within HR, reference checks, copies of all required

documents and checks (excluding police checks only). A copy of the CV and application letter will automatically be added via Oracle HCM.

Related policies

[PDF](#) [Acceptable use of Information Systems Statute](#)

[PDF](#) [Records Management Policy](#)

Downloads

[DOC](#) [Request for written reference \(academic staff\) letter template \(32.0 KB\)](#)

[DOC](#) [Verbal reference check template \(76.5 KB\)](#)

Related links

[Ministry of Justice](#)

[New Zealand Police](#)