

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Recruitment and Screening Requirements

EFFECTIVE DATE	01/02/2023
POLICY OWNER	Participation, Community and Game Development
POLICY CONTACT	NRL Child Safety and Policies Officer

1. PURPOSE

This Safeguarding Children and Young People Recruitment and Screening Requirements (**Recruitment and Screening Requirements**) provides an outline of how NRL will deliver its commitments to keeping our Children and Young People in NRL safe when recruiting for NRL People including employees and volunteers.

NRL takes child protection seriously and ensures that the organisation recruits staff and volunteers who are suitably qualified and committed to providing professional, safe and enjoyable programs and services to Children and Young People.

The Recruitment and Screening Requirements have been developed to provide a fair, consistent and comprehensive recruitment process across NRL activities, programs, services and facilities for paid and unpaid people who are suitably qualified and committed to providing professional, safe and enjoyable activities, programs, services and facilities to Children and Young People in rugby league.

While much of the detail in the Recruitment and Screen Requirements relates to working with Children and Young People, the same concepts remain applicable for those working with adults. NRL will work to ensure all individuals recruited to work within the organisation are appropriate and qualified for the position they hold, and that consistent recruitment and screening processes are applied at all levels and to all roles within NRL.

All capitalised terms in the Recruitment and Screen Requirements are defined terms which can be found in the Dictionary of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy (Policy).

2. FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

The Recruitment and Screening Requirements should be read in conjunction with and is supported by the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework which includes:

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Behaviour \(Code\)](#);
[Safeguarding Children and Young People Recruitment and Screening Requirements \(Recruitment and Screening Requirements\)](#);
[Safeguarding Children and Young People Induction and Training Requirements \(Induction and Training Requirements\)](#);
[Safeguarding Children and Young People Complaints and Reporting Procedure \(Complaints and Reporting Procedure\)](#);
[Code of Conduct \(Community Rugby League\)](#); and
[NRL Code of Conduct](#) (Employees).

Capitalised words have the meaning set out in the Policy.

3. SCOPE

The Recruitment and Screening Requirements apply to:

- all NRL staff (employees and contractors);
- all employees and contractors of the NRL Affiliated States;
- volunteers, coaches, sports trainers and participants who have a current and valid registration via the NRL Competition Management System;
- anyone engaged to provide NRL Services on behalf of NRL;
- QRL - where the Framework is adopted; and
- NSWRL – where the Framework is adopted.

In circumstances where the Recruitment and Screen Requirements do not apply to NRL clubs, state or community leagues, the NRL is committed to supporting the understanding of the NRL commitment to safeguarding Children and Young People through provision of resources, access to training materials and transparent and consistent communication.

4. KEY REQUIREMENTS – RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

Decisions about a person's suitability to work with Children and Young People will be made ethically, transparently, efficiently, fairly and in a timely manner. Procedures will be consistent and are to be applied in all cases. The following checks are to be incorporated into the recruitment and screening process for all employees to achieve these aims:



- Identity check;
- Qualifications check;
- Working with Children Check;
- National Police Check;
- Face to Face interviews that include questions to check for suitability to safeguard the wellbeing of Children and Young People; and
- Professional and personal reference checks.

4.1 RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

4.1.1 ADVERTISING

All available positions will be advertised internally and/or externally, and all advertisements are to contain the following statement, or where space is at a premium, an abbreviated form of the following statement:

The NRL is a child-safe organisation committed to providing a safe place for all children to learn and have fun. We have strong recruitment procedures to make sure the safest and most suitable people work with us and require all applicants to undergo an extensive screening process prior to appointment, a process that will include, but is not limited to comprehensive reference checks, an identity check, "Working with Children" checks and/or national criminal history checks.

4.1.2 POSITION DESCRIPTION

Clear positions descriptions for all jobs are developed which include NRL's Commitment Statement to Safeguarding Children and Young People and the Code of Behaviour.

4.1.3 RISK ANALYSIS FOR EACH POSITION DESCRIPTION

People and Culture undertake a Risk Analysis of each role and position description to determine the risk rating (Red, Amber or Green) with respect to Children and Young People. This is completed so that NRL can understand:

- anticipated contact levels with Children and Young People



- within each position;
- whether the candidate will be working directly with Children and Young People;
- whether the nature of the job will place them in contact with Children and Young People;
- Other considerations to be taken into account when categorizing risk levels:
 - If the job is mainly office based, will the job sometimes involve travel to other remote or overseas offices or in small communities? Will this mean they have contact with children?
 - Will the job involve work with children with disabilities or particularly vulnerable children in complex situations? What skills and experience are required for this role?
 - Will the job involve working in an unsupervised environment, or require overnight care of children?
 - If the job is primarily administrative in nature and/or office based, is there any element of handling data relating to children? e.g. personal data relating to junior participants.

APPENDIX 1 sets out the risk assessment which must be applied to all positions and employees of NRL.

4.2 COMMITMENT

NRL's Code and Policy is to be supplied to all applicants for roles in the NRL prior to commencing, to ensure the applicant has read and is aware of these documents, and is committed to complying with them.

4.3 FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW

All applicants should attend at least one face-to-face interview with a member of the NRL's people and culture team or other suitable manager. Applicants who will be in direct contact with Children and Young People or have access to sensitive data of Children and Young People to perform their job must have at least one face to face interview.

During face-to-face interviews the NRL employee conducting the

interview will examine the following issues, at a minimum, relating to the applicant's suitability to work with Children and Young People:

- the applicant's beliefs and values in relation to the treatment of Children and Young People;
- the applicant's previous professional experience, qualifications and competence;
- the applicant's reasons for leaving previous positions involving work with Children and Young People;
- any potential concerns NRL may have with the applicant's resume or work history, such as gaps in their work history, frequent job changes, inability to nominate precise start or end dates for previous roles;
- the applicant's general awareness and understanding of safeguarding Children and Young People and child safety;
- the applicants understanding of the NRL policy documents, including in particular the NRL Code of Behaviour, in the context of their beliefs, values and experiences.

In undertaking an interview with any applicant for a staff or volunteer role the interviewer will refer to NRL's predetermined 'Interview Questions' **Appendix 2** at the end of this document contains a list of sample questions that can be asked of applicants.

It is strongly recommended that if an applicant is known to a member of the interview panel from a context outside of the NRL, then that person should stand down from the interview panel due to a real or perceived conflict of interest.

4.4 INTERVIEW DOCUMENTATION

All NRL employees in attendance at the interview will document interview questions and the applicant's responses and, that documentation will be added to the employment and/or volunteer file of the successful applicant.

NRL employees conducting the interview will highlight NRL's commitment to protecting Children and Young People from abuse and creating environments for safeguarding Children and Young People. NRL's screening requirements and their purpose will be explained to applicants as part of the interview.

4.5 PROOF OF IDENTITY

Some people intending to commit acts of sexual abuse make fraudulent claims about their qualifications and identity. NRL has developed a proof of identity check list in which three (3) categories of documents must be sighted by the People and Culture representative conducting the recruitment process.

The successful applicant must provide at least one (1) form of photographic identification and at least two (2) other forms of identification should be signed off by NRL People and Culture before the appointment can be made (see **Appendix 3 – Proof of Identity Checklist**).

Copies of documentation must be added to the other recruitment paperwork of the successful applicant and archived in the relevant file location where the applicant is successful.

4.6 PROOF OF QUALIFICATIONS

If a person is being recruited on the basis of their professional qualifications, a copy of the transcript of the person's relevant qualification should be sighted and a copy made and kept in the relevant file location. Enquiries with the relevant educational institution or professional association may be made to ensure qualifications are legitimate and current. Applicants should be advised of this process.

4.7 WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS (WWCC)

Each Australian State and Territory has its own legislation in relation to screening of staff and volunteers in relation to working with Children and Young People. At the time of writing, VIC, NSW, QLD and WA have legislated WWCC. In QLD, the WWCC is referred to as a Blue Card. In South Australia, a Criminal History Assessment is in place.

In the event of a discrepancy between these screening and background check requirements and State or Territory laws, the State or Territory law will prevail only to the extent that the State or Territory law has a higher level of WWCC requirements.

The person responsible for recruiting a staff or volunteer must sight the applicable WWCC or equivalent check as applicable (depending on the jurisdiction) and record relevant details of the WWCC. The WWCC must have NRL recorded on their WWCC



record with the issuing authority via the relevant government department in the State in which they reside where required to do so.

NRL will not engage a person to work with or have contact with children who does not have a satisfactory WWCC in the relevant jurisdiction(s).

It is a serious breach of the Recruitment and Screening Requirements if an individual who has convictions that would make him/her ineligible to be granted a WWCC (or equivalent) clearance, gains employment, or is allowed to volunteer with Children or Young People who access our services, programs, events or facilities. It is a serious breach if an individual continues in his/her employment, coaching or volunteer role with us if they have been charged or convicted of a crime that would make him/her ineligible to be granted a WWCC (or equivalent) clearance.

All staff and volunteers within NRL are advised as part of the recruitment process, that they must report before their recruitment and during their employment, any criminal conviction or charge that indicates that they present a potential risk to Children or Young People to whom they help deliver service or that may change their status within any of the checks that have been performed, e.g. WWCC. See **Appendix 4** for relevant contact details for each State.

4.8 NATIONAL CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS

Depending on the relevant legislation, NRL requires a successful applicant for a role to have completed a 'national criminal history record check' (also known as a 'police check').

It is our policy to advise applicants that, unless their criminal history suggests that they may pose a risk to Children and Young People, a criminal history does not automatically preclude them from obtaining work within our organisation. If information on their criminal history is relevant to our employment decision, we provide the applicant with an opportunity to respond to the contents of their criminal history check (if they wish to do so).

In such cases, the People and Culture representative responsible for recruiting for the position is to document the matter and refer it to the NRL's General Counsel, for assessment of the applicant's suitability in accordance with the requirements of the role for which they have applied.

The decision to employ, or not employ, an applicant because of a criminal history

check result, will be communicated to the applicant.

No copy of the police check must be retained, and the original must be destroyed – in a secure manner – on completion of the selection process. NRL People and Culture will record the date and certificate number of the police check in the applicant’s staff and/or volunteer file on a ‘National criminal history record check’ form.

No applicant is to be engaged or contracted to a position until after completion of their WWCC or national criminal history record check.

4.9 INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECKS

Any applicant who has resided in an overseas country for twelve (12) months or more in the last ten (10) years should contact the relevant overseas police force to obtain a criminal or police record check.

Some countries will not release information regarding an individual for personal or third-party purposes. Where police records checks cannot be made, referee checks must be conducted with at least two (2) individuals who personally knew the individual while they were working in a foreign jurisdiction.

The applicant must be informed that referees will be asked whether they have knowledge or information concerning the applicant, which would adversely affect the applicant from performing the job, including any relevant criminal offences. The credentials of persons acting as referees must be verified and can include previous employers, government officials and/or family members.

Overseas applicants should not commence employment until this process is satisfactorily completed and this decision should be signed off by People and Culture.

4.10 USE OF EXTERNAL RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

When we use external recruitment agencies, we ensure that they undertake recruitment processes that meet the Recruitment and Screening Requirements and that they provide records to us that demonstrate their compliance with these requirements.



4.11 MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH WWCC & CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS

NRL will implement procedures to ensure that all staff and/or volunteers undergo a periodic WWCC or equivalent to confirm that they do not have criminal charges and/or convictions that would pose a particular risk if they work with children or young people.

All NRL employees are required to inform the NRL if they are subject to any criminal conviction or other matter which would prevent them from working with children.

4.12 INTERNAL CHECKS

NRL will review its internal systems and databases before hiring a new employee as a means of gathering additional information about the applicant and any previous interactions with the NRL either as an employee or as a volunteer or participant.

4.13 UNDERTAKING REFERENCE CHECKS

People and Culture representative leading the recruitment process must conduct a minimum of two (2) verbal reference checks for all shortlisted applicants to gather additional information about the applicant's suitability to work in the role for which they have applied.

Applicants being considered for appointment should, in the first instance, be asked to provide contact details for two (2) professional referees who can provide information relating to the applicant's suitability to work with children. Professional referees:

- should include a representative of the applicant's current or most recent employer; and
- include a person who has had a direct managerial relationship with the applicant and so be capable of commenting knowledgeably in relation to the applicant, and ideally have been the applicant's supervisor or line manager.

Personal referees are not recommended. However, if there is no option but to include a personal referee, then that referee:

- should not be related to the applicant;



- should have known the applicant for at least 12 months; and
- must be able to vouch for the applicant's reputation and character.

Reference checks must involve directly contacting the referee.

Difficulty in contacting referees, such as those based overseas, or those who have left an organisation, is not justification for accepting lower standards of scrutiny.

Details of conversations with referees in relation to the suitability of an applicant to work with Children and Young People are retained within the NRL People and Culture database and attached to the applicant's record together with other records gathered throughout the recruitment process, such as interview answers and responses.

NRL has developed 'Verification questions and sample reference check questions' as a resource to guide the reference checking process with a referee. (See Appendix 5).

Detailed records of questions and responses from the reference check are to be filed in the NRL People and Culture IT database as part of the applicant's staff or volunteer file prior to commencement.

4.14 GUIDELINES FOR PARENT-VOLUNTEERS, EXTERNAL PROVIDERS AND MINORS

4.14.1 PARENT-VOLUNTEERS

NRL emphasises to parents and volunteers the commitment NRL has made to safeguarding Children and Young People and providing a safe environment for Children and Young People to prosper.

We inform prospective parent volunteers that NRL is committed to taking every precaution to safeguard the Children and Young People who are involved in NRL activities, programs, services and facilities. Where the jurisdiction allows, we require parents and volunteers to complete a WWCC or, where this is not applicable, a Criminal History Check.

4.14.2 EXTERNAL PROVIDERS INCLUDING CONTRACTORS AND CONSULTANTS

Where NRL makes use of the services of staff and/or volunteers for short periods we comply with the requirements under the legislation that applies to the relevant

jurisdiction(s) with respect to WWCC.

Where such checks are not undertaken, it is imperative that those working with NRL are supported, closely supervised and monitored while they assist with delivering our service – in line with NRL’s commitment and procedures to safeguard Children and Young People.

Recruitment and screening requirements for external providers are dependent on their level of interaction with Children and Young People, both in terms of the level of unsupervised contact they may have, and the duration of contact. The matrix following is a guide to recruitment and screening requirements which should be applied to all position descriptions for recruitment and existing positions.

4.15 REMOTE AND DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Many parts of the NRL operate in remote or disadvantaged communities. Children and Young People from these communities may be more vulnerable because of a lack of resources, lack of child protection and/or law enforcement systems.

Where possible, and especially in remote communities, supervising staff should regularly ask the program participants, community members and leaders for feedback on the staff member or volunteer working in the community, and whether they have any concerns about their behaviour or actions, particularly in relation to Children and Young People.

APPENDIX 1 – RISK MATRIX

		Frequency and duration of contact			
		Nature of contact	Short-term	Ongoing intermittent	Ongoing
Degree of unsupervised direct service contact	Unsupervised, direct service contact	Example: Emergency relief teacher, coach, educator, carer, mentor, counsellor, weekend camp leader, chaperone	Example: Specialist teacher, coach, educator in skills program run every term	Example: Teacher, coach, educator, carer, mentor, counsellor, manager of children's services, Board members	
	Supervised, direct service or secondary contact	Example: Work experience, administration & reception, event support	Example: Maintenance contractor, administration & reception, parent volunteer	Example: Work experience, kitchen staff, administration & reception in children's service	
	Supervised, no direct service or secondary contact	Example: fundraisers, marketing, auditor, building contractor in non-child related areas	Example: Maintenance contractor, finance, bookkeeper, administration in non-child related areas	Example: Staff and volunteers in non-child related areas, after hours cleaners	

**Depending on the WWCC legislation in the jurisdiction where the staff, volunteer or contractor is working.

Risk Management Requirements	WWCC **	Interview with Child Safe questions	Reference with Child Safe questions	Signed Code of Behaviour	Child Safe Course (e.g. Play by the Rules)
Minimal	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Low	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Medium	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
High	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

APPENDIX 2 – SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The below is a list of sample interview questions to ask to ascertain a person’s suitability for employment or engagement with NRL, and more specifically with Children and Young People of NRL. It is important to have a person trained to identify ‘red flags’ in a person’s response included in the interview.

- Have you ever had/If you had a reasonable concern about the welfare and safety of a child, what would/did you do?
- Have you ever had any allegations or disciplinary action taken against you in relation to working with children and young people?
- Do you think that children and young people need special friends or mentors at times? How might you be a mentor for a young person without getting too close?
- What are your views about touching children and young people? When might it be appropriate to comfort them by putting an arm around them?
- What would you do if you thought a young person was being abused at home?
- Have you ever had a child or teenager make a sexual advance towards you? Why might this happen? What did you do, or what might you do?
- What would you do if you thought another adult’s behaviour in relation to children was inappropriate or outside the boundaries of their role?
- Have you ever had to speak to your manager about inappropriate behaviours of a colleague? What was the situation? What did you do?
- What do you find most rewarding and least rewarding about working with children and young people?
- What do you find most challenging about working with children and young people?
- Are there any children or young people you particularly do or don’t like to work with and why?
- Have you ever lost your temper when working with children or young people? What happened?

- What was the trigger? What was the outcome?
- How would you deal with a child who was having a tantrum or yelling at you and/or others, or acting aggressively towards another player or an umpire?
 - How would you handle a child who appears sad and refuses to participate in activities?

APPENDIX 3 – PROOF OF IDENTITY CHECKLIST

PROFORMA

The following proforma is provided to assist with reference checking

PROOF OF IDENTITY CHECK LIST

Applicant's name: _____

Position and Department: _____

One form of photographic ID and at least two (2), but preferably three (3) or four (4) of the following identification items were cited by:

_____ People and Culture Representative

Driver's Licence
 Passport
 Medicare Card
 Utility Bill
 Credit Card
 WWC Card
 Other: _____

_____ signature of P&C Representative

_____/_____/_____ <Date>

NRL Screening Checklist

RECRUITMENT

APPENDIX 4 – RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

(a copy of this record must be maintained confidentially by P & C representative that undertook the recruitment whether the applicant was engaged or not)

NRL P & C Name: _____

Title: _____

Applicant name: _____

Applicant Position: _____

RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST:

Sighted and copied Proof of Identity documents

Sighted and copied proof of qualifications – verified with institution where necessary

Sighted and copied Working with Children Check

National Police Check undertaken – if applicable – date completed _____

Interview #1 conducted. People in attendance: _____

Interview #2 conducted. People in attendance: _____

Reference Check #1 with _____

Reference Check #2 with _____

Reference Check #3 with _____



Reference Check #4 with _____

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Applicant appointed: Yes / No

Reason for Non-Appointment: _____

Applicant Informed of Decision: _____ <date>



APPENDIX 5 – REFEREE CHECKS

1. VERIFYING RECRUITMENT INFORMATION WITH REFEREES
2. VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION SUPPLIED IN RESUME AND INFORMATION PROVIDED AT INTERVIEW POINT
 - What was the applicant's position title in your organisation?
 - Dates they were employed in the organisation?
 - Main duties and responsibilities?
 - Assessment of their performance in that role?
 - Weaknesses and strengths you observed?
 - Willingness to consult with manager or someone above them in the hierarchy and seek assistance in challenging situations?
 - Was the applicant a team player?
 - Why did the applicant leave your organisation?
 - Would you be willing to re-employ the applicant in your organisation or another organisation? Why?/Why not?

SAMPLE REFEREE QUESTIONS RELATING TO APPLICANT SUITABILITY TO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Should the answers to any of the questions you ask from the list below make you wonder, delve deeper into the matter, do not gloss over it or move on to the next question:

- What experience does the applicant have in working with Children and Young People?
 - E.g. length of time they worked with children, age range of children, skills and abilities of children?
- Do you have any concerns about the applicant working with children and young people?
 - If so, what are they are why do you have them?
 - Are you comfortable in knowing that at times the applicant may be working alone (that is, unsupervised) with children and young people?
- How would you describe the applicant's strengths and weaknesses in relation to working with children and young people?
- In your opinion are there any challenges the applicant would face in working with or engaging with children and young people?
- Are there any age groups he/she may not be suited to work with?
 - If yes, why?
- Does the applicant use appropriate language when communicating with children?
 - Can you provide an example?
- Have you observed the applicant disciplining a child for misbehaviour?

- If yes, please describe the scenario and the appropriateness of the discipline in this context.
- Do you know of any instances when the applicant has demonstrated any inappropriate physical contact with children?
- Can you tell me about a situation when the applicant had to handle a child or young person who was:
 - angry and lashing out physically?
 - distressed and required comforting?
 - uncooperative and refused to participate?
- How did the applicant relate to the children/young people's parent's in the context of their work?
- Does the applicant become angry easily?
- How does the applicant deal with pressure?
- How does the applicant deal with a child/young person/staff member or parent who is demanding?
 - Can you give an example?
- Do you know of any instances where the applicant acted outside the boundaries of their defined role?
- Have there been any findings against the applicant in relation to allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards children or young people?