



## GEELONG GRAMMAR SCHOOL®

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### Guidelines for Reference Checks of New Staff

#### Introduction:

The following guidelines are to be followed when short listing and then interviewing “external” applicants for positions at Geelong Grammar School. The aim is to ensure, as far as practicable, every effort is undertaken to assess that applicants are eligible and qualified to work at GGS. It is important that staff engaged in interviewing or undertaking reference checks seek advice from Human Resources if they are unsure or have any questions regarding any aspect of these guidelines.

#### Privacy and confidentiality

The recruitment and reference checking process should ensure that the confidentiality and privacy of both the applicant and any referees is strictly maintained. All applications for all positions are strictly confidential and permission must be obtained from the applicant before contacting any referees or advising any other individual of the application, with the exception of the Interview Panel. Information obtained through reference checking should only be used to assist the assessment of the suitability of the applicant for employment purposes and should not be shared or provided to other individuals external to the Interview Panel.

#### Approval to advertise a position and make an offer of employment

The following steps must be completed prior to the advertising of a position or making an offer of employment to any position at Geelong Grammar School.

1. **Approval** must be obtained from the Head of Campus, Commercial Director and Principal prior to advertising and/or the employment of any individual to a position at the School (completion of a “Staff Replacement Form”)
2. The Interview Panel must include both male and female members (unless in exceptional circumstance).
3. An updated Position Description must be made available to all candidates upon request and the Key Selection Criteria used to short list applicants.
4. Positions must be advertised in accordance with the GGS Recruitment Guidelines (Section A).

#### Short listing checklist

Where possible the appropriate information for each of the following questions should be obtained prior to interviewing, **No offer of employment can be made until the appropriate information is obtained from the preferred applicant.**

1. Is the applicant an **Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident**? If not, do they have an appropriate **visa** for the purpose of employment? If the applicant is not an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident and either holds or will require a visa then it is important that advice is obtained from the Human Resources Department prior to any interview, where possible, and definitely before any offer of employment is made.
2. Does the applicant have a current Working With Children Check (WWC) or equivalent (ie CRC)?
3. If the vacancy is a Teaching role does the applicant have VIT registration?
4. Does the applicant have appropriate qualifications to undertake the role (Tertiary, Diploma, Certificates etc.)?

## Interview checklist

The aim of undertaking a thorough and comprehensive interview and referee checking process is to ensure as far as practical that there is evidence that the applicant can fulfil the following criteria (refer to the reference checking template and attachments to this document);

1. The applicant is capable of performing the intended role.
2. The applicant will behave in a manner that is consistent with the values of the School.
3. The applicant has NOT previously engaged in behaviour (including but not limited to criminal behaviour, misconduct or related behaviour) that would be regarded as inappropriate within a School and/or workplace environment or which would reasonably be regarded as presenting an unacceptable risk and therefore prevent them working within a school environment.

If the evidence for any of the above criteria is unsatisfactory then an offer of employment should not be made. Once again advice can be sought from Human Resources.

## Cyber check of external applicants

For the Senior Positions listed below, a Cyber check by undertaking a "Google name Search" of the preferred external applicant(s), should be completed as a precaution to ensure that there is little or no risk that the School is unaware of the applicant having engaged in behaviour which may be regarded as inappropriate or which may harm the image of the School or pose a risk to students or employees. Advice on how to undertake a "Google name Search" can be obtained by contacting the Director of IT. The findings from a "Google name Search" should be discussed with Head of Campus and/or the Principal or Commercial Director.

### Teaching Positions

- Vice Principal
- Head of Campus
- Deputy Head of Campus
- Head of House
- Director
- Chaplain

### Non Teaching Positions

- Commercial Director
- Director Community Relations
- Human Resources Manager
- Finance and Administration Manager
- Communications and Marketing Manager
- Director of Information Technology
- Manager Information, Communications and Technology
- Registrar
- Campus Business Manager
- Wellbeing Centre Manager
- Retail Manager
- Senior Nurse
- Psychologists

## Contractors:

Note: It is important that the staff member responsible for engaging contractors or people employed through agencies (such as Emergency Teachers) ensure that the contract provider undertakes a similar reference checking process for any person engaged to work at the School. The same questions can be asked of the contractor regarding their referee checking process.

**Reference Checking:****Responsibility for undertaking a reference checks**

The following positions are responsible for undertaking reference checks within each campus.

**Teaching positions**

Type of positions	Responsibility for referee check
Senior positions reporting to the Principal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heads of Campus</li> <li>• Vice Principal</li> </ul>	Principal
Senior positions of responsibility reporting to Heads of Campus/Directors (CMG) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors (CMG)</li> <li>• DHOC</li> <li>• HOH</li> <li>• HOD/HOF</li> <li>• Assistant Directors (Timbertop)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Corio:</i> Principal/Vice Principal/Head of Middle School (may be delegated to CMG Directors)</p> <p><i>Other campuses</i> Head of Campus (may be delegated to Deputy Head of Campus)</p>
All other teaching positions	<p><i>Corio:</i> Principal/Vice Principal/Head of Middle School (may be delegated to CMG Directors)</p> <p><i>Other campuses</i> Head of Campus (may be delegated to Deputy Head of Campus)</p>

(CMG = Corio management Group; HOC = Head of Campus; DHOC = Deputy Head of Campus; HOH = Head of House; HOD = Head of Department; HOF = Head of Faculty)

**Non Teaching positions**

Type of positions	Responsibility for referee check
Executive positions reporting to the Principal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors (e.g. Commercial or Community Relations)</li> </ul>	Principal
Senior management positions	
Those reporting directly to Principal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers (e.g. Human Resources)</li> </ul>	Principal
Those reporting to Executive Directors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager Finance &amp; Administration</li> <li>• Manager Communications and Marketing</li> <li>• Fundraising Manager</li> <li>• Alumni Manager</li> <li>• Retail Manager</li> <li>• Property Manager</li> <li>• Wellbeing Centre Manager</li> <li>• Risk Manager</li> </ul>	<p><i>Corio:</i> Executive Directors</p>
Those reporting to HOC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campus Business Manager</li> </ul>	<p><i>Other campuses</i> Head of Campus</p>

All other non teaching roles	<p><i>Corio:</i> Executive Directors or relevant Senior Managers (including Directors, HOH, HOF and HOD)</p> <p><i>Other campuses</i> Head of Campus, Deputy Head of Campus or Campus Business Manager (May be delegated by HOC to other staff e.g. Assistants Directors, Head of Outdoor Education, Director ELC etc.)</p>
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#### How many Referees are required?

Ideally three referees will be provided by an applicant (two professional referees and 1 character referee). The minimum number of referees required to adequately complete a reference check is two. Where possible and practical, both referees should be professional referees. **Note** professional referees are referees who have worked with the applicant.

#### Areas to be covered in a reference check

Please note there are two types of questions that can be asked of referees. The first are **MANDATORY** and **MUST** be asked of all referees. The referee's responses to the questions should be documented and included with the original application and resume and securely stored by the Human Resources Department (see documentation below and refer to Attachments 1 and 2). The second type of questions are more general and should be tailored to specific role requirements of position and be used to obtain further information about the applicant.

#### Mandatory questions

These questions **MUST** be asked of all referees and external applicants. At interview applicants **MUST** be advised that these questions will also be asked of their referees. An explanation should be provided to the referees indicating that the questions are mandatory and that the School asks all prospective employees and their referees to ensure that we meet all of our welfare obligations to all of our students and staff.

1. Positions at Geelong Grammar School require that staff come into contact with students and/or work directly with students. Are you aware of any previous incidents, behaviour or aspect of the applicant's history that may pose a risk to students (or staff) and therefore make the applicant unsuitable to work within a School environment?
2. Is there anything that you think we ought to know that may make the applicant inappropriate to appoint to a position within a School environment?
3. It is our policy to ask for written reference for our record. Would you be prepared to provide one or complete a simple checklist indicating your response to the previous questions?

**Note:** If the referee is not willing or unable to provide a written reference, then ask the following question.

4. Could you please explain why you do not want to provide a written reference?

Thank the referee for their time and willingness to provide information.

### **General areas and content for reference checks**

The following guidelines may assist when seeking information from referees. Request specific examples of behaviour or outcomes that may confirm or support assertions by the referee/applicant (i.e. ask for evidence).

1. Confirm that the applicant's role/responsibilities match those portrayed by the applicant and cover the KSC for the position (what did they do in previous role/s)
2. Ascertain how well they managed the responsibilities
3. What are the applicant's key strengths as an individual/employee?
4. What are the applicant's key areas for improvement as an individual/employee?
5. How well does the applicant work with others (teamwork)?
6. How well does the applicant manage the performance of others (for Management roles only)?
7. General personal attributes:
  - a. Reliability
  - b. Resourcefulness
  - c. Innovation
  - d. Problem solving capabilities
  - e. Interpersonal and communication skills
  - f. Ability to manage conflicting demands, workload, pressure/stressful situations (resiliency)
  - g. Knowledge and technical skills (e.g. IT, specific knowledge relevant to the job)
  - h. Ability and desire to learn and develop new skills.
8. Raise any issues that you believe need further clarification or information that may have come from the interview process or other referees.
9. Confirm from the referees' perspective why they believe the applicant applied for the role/how does it assist their career path/where do they see the applicant in 5 years time (career options and potential etc.).

## **Documentation**

### **Interview panel documentation**

The referee's responses to the questions should be documented and attached to a copy of the applicant's resume and list of referees. The specific responses to the mandatory questions **MUST** be documented (using Attachment 1: the Reference Check Summary Form) as evidence that the questions were asked of referees (and applicants). The individual undertaking the reference checks should sign and date the document. Attachment 2 (and any written references) is **confidential** and is stored in a secure filing system maintained by the Human Resources Department. It is **NOT** stored on Payroll/Personnel files and no other copies are kept.

### **Referee documentation**

Attachment 2 can be sent to the referee to respond in writing to the mandatory questions and can also be used to provide a written reference. Attachment 2 (and any written references) is also **confidential** and is stored in a secure filing system maintained by the Human Resources Department. It is **NOT** stored on Payroll/Personnel files.

### **Further information**

Further information regarding reference checking can be obtained by contacting the Human Resources Manager.