



Child Safe Recruitment Procedure

March 2024

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1 Purpose

The *Child Safe Recruitment Procedure* (this Procedure) outlines AEPL's child safe recruitment, screening, and induction processes. It aims to ensure only suitable people are selected to work or volunteer with children and young people at AEPL.

2 Scope

This Procedure:

- Applies to Officers, Study Centre Managers, Leaders, Helpers, contractors, and sub-contractors engaged by AEPL to deliver services to children.
- Extends to all aspects of educational activities and programs of AEPL, including those delivered in the physical and online environments.
- Must be followed by recruitment agencies and/or labour suppliers if engaged by AEPL.

3 Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this Procedure:

Term	Meaning
AEPL	Association for Educational Projects Limited.
Centre	Refers to a study centre established by AEPL in which its educational activities are conducted.
Child	A person under the age of 18 years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.
Child abuse	Refers to the acts or omissions (neglect) that result in, or have the likelihood to result in, harm to a child. The forms of child abuse are sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, physical abuse, and exposure to family violence.
Child-related position	Refers to a position within AEPL that involves supervision, care, or responsibility for children.
Helper	A person less than 18 years old invited to help from time to time in a particular activity at a Centre.
Leader	An adult who has an ongoing role in the provision of services in a Centre.
Officer	Has the same meaning given by the <i>Corporations Act 2001</i> (Cth) and includes a director or secretary of AEPL.
Staff	Refers to an individual at AEPL in a paid position. This may include Study Centre Managers.
Study Centre Manager	A person appointed by AEPL to direct activities at a Centre.
Volunteer	Refers to an unpaid employee of AEPL. This includes AEPL Officers, Leaders and Helpers, and may include Study Centre Managers. It also includes other individuals engaged by AEPL on a voluntary basis.

Working with Children Check (WWCC)	Refers to the legislative requirement for individuals to obtain a WWCC (or equivalent) as applicable in any relevant State or Territory.
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4 Recruitment and Selection Principles

AEPL adopts the following recruitment and selection principles when engaging new staff and volunteers:

- The safety and wellbeing of children is paramount
- Applicants are assessed based on their skills, knowledge, and experience
- Procedural fairness is upheld throughout the recruitment and selection process
- Privacy and confidentiality is maintained in accordance with applicable legislation.

5 Recruitment Process

5.1 Job Advertisements

Advertisements for child-related positions must include:

- AEPL’s Statement of Commitment to being a Child Safe Organisation
- A link to AEPL’s *Child Safe Policy* and *Child Safe Code of Conduct*
- Selection Criteria – including key skills, attributes, experience and attitudes to working with children
- Position Description – clearly outlining the child safety responsibilities of the role, including child safe induction and training requirements
- A WWCC requirement and referee checks as a prerequisite to receiving an offer of employment
- A National Police Check if the role involves work in high-risk settings with children such as overseas programs, overnight stays, and transporting children
- The following statement or similar should be included in the position description:
“AEPL is dedicated to safeguarding children from harm. All applicants who will be working with children are required to undergo an extensive screening process prior to appointment.”

5.2 Conducting Interviews

Interviews for child-related positions are conducted by a panel of 2 or 3 AEPL Officers and/or Study Centre Managers to promote consistency and fairness. The interview panel will address the following key areas throughout the interview process:

- AEPL’s commitment to child safety
- Behavioural questions relating to child safe practices, such as:
 - How would you describe your approach when interacting children?
 - Can you describe a time when you had to respond to a child displaying challenging behaviour? How did you handle it?

- Questions to assess the values, motives and attitudes of applicants to determine whether they align with AEPL's commitment to child safety
- Evaluation of the applicant's professional / volunteer experience, qualifications, and competence to work with children.

5.3 Screening and Reference Checks

AEPL conducts the following screening procedures for child-related positions:

- Verification of the applicant's identity, criminal record (*if relevant to the role*), and qualifications
- Direct conversations with at least two identified referees (*where possible*).
Referees should:
 - Have known the applicant for at least 12 months
 - Not be related to the applicant
 - Be able to provide information regarding the applicant's suitability to work with children.
- Verification of WWCC clearances and National Police Checks (*if relevant to the role*) prior to commencement of work
- Recording the applicant's WWCC clearance number, the date of verification, verification outcome, its expiry date and renewal date
- A National Police Check for applicants under 18 years of age (in absence of a WWCC clearance).

5.4 Induction

All new staff and volunteers are required to complete the child safe induction process prior to commencing work with children, which includes the following:

- Sign as acknowledgment that they have read and understand AEPL's *Child Safe Policy* and *Child Safe Code of Conduct*.
- Complete Child Safe Training (provided by AEPL) on the following areas:
 - AEPL's *Child Safe Policy* and *Child Safe Code of Conduct*
 - Children's rights
 - Identifying and responding to signs of child abuse
 - Assessing and managing risks of child abuse
 - Complaints processes
 - Reporting obligations
 - Child safe legal obligations.

5.5 Probation Period

The probationary period allows AEPL to assess an individual's performance of their child safety obligations. AEPL adopts the following processes regarding probationary periods:

- Study Centre Managers are subject to an initial 6-month probationary period as specified in their employment contract.
- Leaders are subject to a 3-month probationary period.

- Officers are responsible for providing support and monitoring the performance of newly appointed Study Centre Managers.
- Study Centre Managers are responsible for providing support and monitoring the performance of new Leaders.
- Throughout the probation period, Officers/Study Centre Managers will:
 - Provide ongoing feedback and support to the individual
 - Evaluate the individual's suitability for the role, taking into account their adherence to the *Child Safe Policy* and *Child Safe Code of Conduct*
 - Offer the individual opportunities to formally or informally express any concerns related to harm or potential harm to children.
- If an individual's performance does not meet the required standard and this performance issue is not resolved through AEPL's performance review and support framework, the individual may be subject to remedial action.

6 Education and Training

AEPL provides child safe training and education to all staff and volunteers on an ongoing basis. AEPL's child safe training is designed to ensure all staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness required to keep children safe from abuse and harm.

Child safe training covers the following key areas:

- AEPL's *Child Safe Policy*, *Child Safe Code of Conduct* and supporting procedures
- Child empowerment and participation
- Forms and possible signs of child abuse
- Catering to diverse needs
- Responding to disclosures
- Complaints handling processes
- Child safe legal obligations
- Child safe risk management, *including the online environment and social media*
- Child-on-child abuse
- Record keeping and information sharing.

AEPL ensures the following:

- Human resources staff and interview panels are adequately educated and trained to execute their duties appropriately and in accordance with this Procedure
- Completion of training by staff and volunteers is documented using AEPL's Safeguarding Register
- All child safe training programs, including induction training, undergo regular reviews (internal and external) to align with legislative and regulatory updates.

7 Review

AEPL will review this Procedure every two (2) years, or earlier as required in accordance with legislative or regulatory updates.

8 Related Policies and Procedures

- *Child Safe Policy*
- *Child Safe Code of Conduct*
- *Child Safe Complaints Handling Procedure*
- *Child Safe Risk Management Procedure*

9 Relevant Legislation

- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 (NSW)*
- *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas)*
- *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)*
- *Worker Screening Regulations 2021 (Vic)*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (QLD)*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020 (QLD)*
- *Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)*
- *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT)*
- *Working with Vulnerable People Regulations 2014 (Tas)*

Appendix A: Working with Children Requirements

1. Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Requirements

1.1. Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Legislation

ACT has a WWVP system under the *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011*. The Act requires people who work, volunteer or have contact with vulnerable people in the course of regulated activities or services to have a background check and risk assessment undertaken.

1.2. Who is a vulnerable person?

A vulnerable person includes a child or an adult who is disadvantaged and is accessing a regulated activity in relation to the disadvantage. An adult who is 'disadvantaged' includes:

- an adult with a physical or mental disability
- an adult who suffers social or financial hardship
- an adult who cannot or has difficulty communicating in English.

1.3. What is a 'regulated activity'?

A 'regulated activity' includes (but is not limited to):

- Transport, including public or private transport that is specifically for, or mainly used by children.
- Child accommodation services, including an overnight camp for children, irrespective of the kind of accommodation or of how many children are involved.
- Counselling and support services for children.

1.4. What is contact with a vulnerable person?

Contact between a person and a vulnerable person means contact that:

- Would reasonably be expected as a normal part of engaging in the activity;
- Is more than incidental to engaging in the activity; and

Example—'incidental' a person works in the same building as a vulnerable person but does not have any physical contact or face-to-face communication with the vulnerable person.

- Is one or more of the following:
 - a) physical contact, including engaging in the activity at the same place as the vulnerable adult
 - b) oral communication (whether face-to-face or by telephone),
 - c) written communication (including electronic or dealing with a record of a vulnerable adult)
 - d) making a decision that affects a vulnerable adult.

1.5. Who is required to obtain a WWC Check?

An individual engaged in a regulated activity and in contact with a vulnerable person requires a WWVP. Examples of persons engaged in a regulated activity include employees, contractors, volunteers, and supervisors.

AEPL is required to ensure that adults engaged in child-related work have a WWVP. This includes individuals in the following positions:

- Officers
- Study Centre Managers
- Leaders
- Chaplains who have direct contact with children
- Adults engaged to attend overnight camps with children
- Contractors and sub-contractors.

1.6. AEPL and Centre Obligations

Under the WWVP system, AEPL / the Centre's are required to:

- Identify paid or volunteer roles that may need WWVP registration
- Check both sides of the WWVP registration card to make sure the registration type entitles staff to work or volunteer in their specific role.
- Keep a record of registration details for each worker
- Set reminders to make sure workers aren't working beyond registration expiry dates.

Employers can confirm a WWVP registration is valid by emailing WWVP@act.gov.au. AEPL will need to provide the registration holder's:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- WWVP registration number.

2. New South Wales (NSW) WWCC Requirements

2.1. WWCC Legislation

NSW has a WWCC system under the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* (NSW).

2.2. Who is required to obtain a WWCC?

Adults engaged in child-related work (paid and unpaid) must have a valid WWCC clearance. AEPL is required to ensure that people in roles that involve child-related work hold a valid WWCC, including:

- Officers
- Study Centre Managers
- Leaders and Helpers
- Chaplains
- Contractors and sub-contractors
- Parent volunteers in activities which their child attends, and volunteer work that involves:
 - Providing personal care for a child with disability while engaged in AEPL activities or programs
 - Participating in a formal mentoring program
 - Attending an overnight camp for children.

2.3. Definition of Child-related work

'Child related work' is work that involves direct contact by an individual with a child or children and that contact is a usual part of, and more than incidental to the work. Direct contact includes physical contact or face to face contact.

2.4. AEPL and Centre Obligations

AEPL must verify the WWCC details of individuals engaged in child-related work through the Office of the Children's Guardian's (OCG) online verification system. Refer to [Help to register and verify | Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](#) for guidance on how to register.

AEPL must maintain records of the WWCC information for all staff and volunteers. Relevant information includes:

- WWCC clearance type
- Number
- Expiry date
- Renewal date
- Verification outcome
- Verification date.

2.5. Exemptions

The Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 provides the following exemptions for individuals who **do not** require a WWCC clearance:

- a) An individual who is under the age of 18 years.
- b) A worker who provides administrative, clerical or maintenance services, if the work does not ordinarily involve contact with children for extended periods.
- c) Individuals who work for no more than a total of 5 working days in a calendar year, if the work involves minimal direct contact with children or is supervised when children are present.
- d) A parent, or close relative, of a child when volunteering in connection with a team, program or other activity of which a child is a member or usually participates.
However, the exemption does not apply if the parent/close relative:
 - Provides personal care for a child with disability while engaged in AEPL activities or programs;
 - Participate in a formal mentoring program;
 - Attend an overnight camp for children.

3. Queensland (QLD) Blue Card System

3.1. Blue Card System - Legislation

QLD has a 'Blue Card' system under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (Qld). Individuals who work or volunteer with children in 'regulated employment' are required to have a Blue Card.

3.2. What is regulated employment?

Regulated employment includes employment related to:

- Education and care services
- Health, counselling, and support services, including a service that provides emotional support, mentoring or pastoral care
- Private teaching, coaching, or tutoring
- Religious representatives, including an employee of a business promoting spiritual beliefs and guidance to children, even if the business does not consider itself to be part of an organised religion.

3.3. Who is required to obtain a Blue Card?

AEPL is required to ensure that people working or volunteering in the following positions hold a valid Blue Card:

- Officers
- Study Centre Managers
- Leaders and Helpers
- Chaplains
- Parent volunteers engaged to deliver activities to children
- Persons under 18 years engaged in paid work or student placement
- Contractors and sub-contractors engaged to deliver services or activities to children.

3.4. Exemptions

The following persons are not required to hold a Blue Card:

- Persons under 18 years engaging in voluntary (unpaid) work.
- Paid employees, volunteers or students who work for no more than 7 days in a calendar year.

3.5. AEPL and Centre Obligations

Under the Blue Card System, AEPL / the Centre must:

- Register on Organisation Portal and link all Blue Card holders to AEPL / the Centre
- Check the validity of a person's Blue Card using the online validation tool
- Create and maintain a register to record all staff and volunteer Blue Card information, including the person's full name, DOB, employment type, blue card status, number, expiry date, and validation date
- Implement procedures for managing compliance with the Blue Card system

- Be alert and act on any notification of changes to their staff / volunteer criminal histories.

3.6. Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

Under the Blue Card System, AEPL / the Centre must have a Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy ('the Strategy') in place to create a safe and supportive environment for children.

The Strategy has 8 mandatory requirements, including:

1. Statement of commitment.
2. Code of conduct.
3. Recruitment, selection, training and management.
4. Reporting disclosures and suspicions of harm.
5. Managing breaches.
6. Risk management plan for high-risk activities.
7. Managing compliance with the blue card system.
8. Communication and support.

We recommend that AEPL / the Centre refer to the resources provided by Blue Card Services for further guidance, at [Child and youth risk management strategies | Your rights, crime and the law | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.qld.gov.au/child-and-youth-risk-management-strategies).

Blue Card Services may request a copy of an organisation's strategy at any time, and failure to comply with the requirement to the Strategy in place is an offence under the blue card system.

4. Tasmania Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Requirements

4.1. WWVP Legislation

Tasmania has a WWVP system under the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013* (Tas). Any person (over 16 years of age) who has contact with a vulnerable person as part of a regulated activity must have a WWVP.

4.2. Who is a 'vulnerable person'?

A vulnerable person is defined as a child (under 18 years of age) or an adult in respect of whom a regulated activity is provided.

4.3. What is a 'regulated activity'?

A regulated activity includes child mentoring services (which provide emotional support, mentoring, or pastoral care to children).

4.4. What is contact with a vulnerable person?

Contact with a vulnerable person means contact that:

- would reasonably be expected as a normal part of taking part in the regulated activity; and
- is more than incidental to taking part in the regulated activity; and
- is one or more of the following:
 - physical contact (including taking part in the regulated activity at the same place as the vulnerable person);
 - oral communication (face to face or by telephone);
 - written communication (including electronic communication).

4.5. Who is required to obtain a WWVP?

Persons engaged in a regulated activity who have contact with a vulnerable person (either in a paid or unpaid position) must have a WWVP. This includes employees, volunteers, contractors, subcontractors, and members of a management committee of an unincorporated body.

AEPL is required to ensure that adults working or volunteering with children in the following positions have a WWVP:

- Officers
- Study Centre Managers
- Leaders and Helpers
- Chaplains
- Adult volunteers engaged in child-related activities (unless an exemption applies)
- Adults engaged to attend overnight camps with children (unless an exemption applies)
- Contractors and sub-contractors engaged to deliver services or activities to children.

4.6. Exemptions

A person is not required to obtain a WWVP if:

- The person is engaged in the activity at the same time as another registered person with a WWVP, and the person is not engaged for more than 7 days in a calendar year.
- The person is a close relative of each child who is taking part in the activity and with whom the person has contact.
- The person is engaged as a volunteer and is a close relative of a child who is taking part in the activity.
- The person is engaged in the activity in the same capacity as the child with whom the person has contact.
- The person is engaged in the activity and the only contact that the person has with a child is working with a record of the child.
- The person is engaged in the activity and the only contact that the person has with a child is providing information to, or receiving information from, the child by telephone, unless the person has more than incidental contact with the child.

4.7. AEPL and Centre Obligations

Under the WWVP system, AEPL and/or the Centres must:

- Register AEPL on the Employer Portal
- Check the status of each person's WWVP by entering the application or card number and surname - [Check the status of an application or registration \(cbos.tas.gov.au\)](http://cbos.tas.gov.au). The search will only show applications being currently processed or if they are 'registered'. The search will not show applications that are:
 - incomplete (for example, there are outstanding fees)
 - suspended
 - cancelled
 - refused (that is, a Negative Notice has been issued).

5. Victorian WWCC Requirements

5.1. WWCC Legislation

Victoria has a WWC Check system under the *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)*. Adults engaged in child-related work must hold a WWCC clearance.

5.2. What is child-related work?

Child-related work includes work (paid or unpaid) at or for a service, body, or place, or that involves an activity that usually involves direct contact with a child (under 18 years).

Child-related work includes (but is not limited to) the following services, bodies, places, or activities:

- Coaching or tuition services
- Counselling or other support services
- Overnight camps for children regardless of the type of accommodation or how many children are involved.

5.3. What is direct contact?

Direct contact means any physical, face-to-face, written, oral (e.g. telephone) or electronic (e.g. email) contact between a person and a child.

5.4. Who is required to obtain a WWC Check?

AEPL is required to ensure that adults working or volunteering with children in the following positions have a WWC check clearance:

- Officers
- Study Centre Managers
- Leaders and Helpers
- Chaplains who have direct contact with children
- Adults engaged to attend overnight camps with children (unless an exemption applies)
- Contractors and sub-contractors engaged to deliver services or activities to children.

5.5. Exemptions

The following persons are exempt from obtaining WWC check:

- People under 18 years of age
- Parents who volunteer in the same activity as their child.

5.6. AEPL and Centre Obligations

Under the WWC check system, AEPL / the Centre's are required to:

- Check the validity of each staff/volunteer's WWC Check by using the online [Status Checker](#).
- Record the WWC check numbers, expiry, and verification information for each staff/volunteer.

6. Western Australia (WA) WWC Check Requirements

6.1. WWC Check Legislation

WA has a Working with Children Check (WWC Check) system under the *Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)*. All persons engaged in child-related work in WA require a WWC Check (unless an exemption applies).

6.2. What is 'child-related work'?

Work is child-related work if the usual duties of the work involve, or are likely to involve, contact with a child in connection with (but not limited to) the following services:

- Coaching or private tuition service
- A counselling or other support service
- An overnight camp, regardless of the type of accommodation or how many children are involved.

6.3. What is contact with a child?

Contact with a child includes physical contact, oral communication (face to face, phone), or any form of electronic communication.

6.4. Who is required to obtain a WWC Check?

AEPL is required to ensure that adults engaged in child-related work have a WWC Check. This includes individuals in the following positions:

- Officers
- Study Centre Managers
- Leaders
- Chaplains who have direct contact with children
- Adults engaged to attend overnight camps with children
- Contractors and sub-contractors

6.5. Exemptions

The following persons are exempt from obtaining WWC Check:

- Children (under 18 years) engaged in volunteer work
- Students on placement (under 18 years of age).

6.6. AEPL and Centre Obligations

Under the WWC check system, AEPL / the Centre's are required to:

- Validate the WWC Card or WWC Check application status of employees and volunteers who engage in child-related work, on the WWC Screening Unit website - 'Check Card validity'
- Keep records to demonstrate compliance, refer to the WA Department's guidance on Record Keeping;
- Ensure current WWC Check card holders renew their card before it expires;

- Notify the WWC Screening Unit if they reasonably suspect an employee or volunteer has been charged with or convicted of an offence which makes it inappropriate for them to engage in child-related work.