

<b>Name of Guidelines</b>	<b>Referees Reports Guidelines</b>
<b>Description of Guidelines</b>	<i>These guidelines will support Nominated Supervisors and Chairs of Selection Panels collect verbal references arising from either direct recruitment appointment or selection appointment and to meet compliance with the Privacy Amendment Act.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> New Guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/> Revision
<b>Description of Revision</b>	<i>Delete</i> <i>Please type brief description of the deletion and specify information to be deleted</i>
	<i>Insert</i> <i>Please type brief description of the insert and specify information to be inserted</i>

### Human Resources Directorate

<b>Policy and Revision Number</b>	
<b>Original Effective Date</b>	
<b>Review Due Date</b>	
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## 1. Background Information

These guidelines are intended to assist Nominated Supervisors and Chairs of Selection Panels for academic levels A to D and general staff positions at HEW Level 1 to 9 collect verbal references arising from either direct recruitment appointment or selection appointment and to meet compliance with the Privacy Amendment Act.

The completion of referee reports is an essential component of the recruitment and selection process. The objectives of contacting referees are:

- To obtain information about an individual's experience, knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to selection criteria / requirements of the position;
- To confirm the accuracy of an individual's work/academic history and performance claims;
- To obtain general information and to probe areas in need of clarification or further elaboration.

The guidelines should be read in conjunction with ACU's Staff Recruitment & Selection Policy and Recruitment Privacy Policy.

## 2. Guidelines

There are two types of appointments:

- i) Appointment by Direct Recruitment – where an individual is appointed to a position by invitation and without advertisement.
- ii) Appointment by Selection – where an individual is appointed to a position based on merit following the University's recruitment and selection process that includes advertising the position, shortlisting and interviewing.

Both Direct Recruitment Appointments and Selection Appointments require the completion of referees reports prior to any offer of employment being made.

### 2.1 Collection of Information - Direct Recruitment Appointments (casual / fixed-term, normally less than 2 years)

- 2.1.1 The proposed appointee is required to provide the full contact details of three work referees. Such referees should be able to speak with authority regarding a candidate's performance (eg. previous supervisor). The proposed appointee should be advised that referee checking is part of our standard recruitment procedures.
- 2.1.2 By providing referee details an individual is authorising the University to contact only the nominated referees.
- 2.1.3 One Referee Report is to be completed for each referee.
- 2.1.4 The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for conducting reference checks.
- 2.1.5 Only referees nominated by the candidate may be approached for references.
- 2.1.6 Reference checks are normally carried out by telephone prior to any offer of employment being made.
- 2.1.7 Referees must be made aware that their response may be viewed by the candidate in accordance with legislation and that they do not have anonymity from the candidate.
- 2.1.8 Referees may be provided with a copy of the position description and Mission statement, usually by fax or email prior to the discussion. Alternatively the position description and selection criteria may be verbally explained to referees, who are asked to comment on the candidate's attributes against each of the selection criteria. Similar questions should be asked of each referee. Questions should focus on the candidate's characteristics and experience related to the selection criteria, job performance and work history. Verbal referee checks should be structured and probing and framed in terms of the selection criteria.

- 2.1.9** The referees' comments must be documented on the Referee Report (see attachment). A summary of referees' verbal comments for the successful candidate must be attached to the relevant approval form submitted to Human Resources for appropriate record keeping.
- 2.2 Collection of Information - Selection Appointment (fixed-term or continuing)**
- 2.2.1** Candidates are required to provide the full contact details of three work referees. Such referees should be able to comment with authority regarding a candidate's performance (eg. previous supervisor). Candidates should be advised that referee checking is part of our standard recruitment and selection procedures.
- 2.2.2** By providing referee details a candidate is authorising the University to contact only the nominated referees.
- 2.2.3** One report is to be completed for each Referee.
- 2.2.4** The Chair of the selection committee is responsible for conducting referee checks or delegating a nominated member of the selection committee to conduct referee checks.
- 2.2.5** The Chair may contact referees on behalf of the selection committee. Alternatively, a conference call or speaker phone may be used so that all selection committee members can participate.
- 2.2.6** Selection committee members may not act as referees for a candidate and, if requested by an applicant to act as a referee, should advise the candidate to seek an alternative referee.
- 2.2.7** Only referees nominated by the candidate may be approached for references.
- 2.2.8** Reference checks are normally carried out by telephone following the interview process and prior to any offer of employment being made.
- 2.2.9** Referee reports are to be sought at minimum for the preferred candidate. If the committee has clearly identified a first ranked candidate, then referee checks need only be conducted for the first ranked candidate. However, if references suggest that the applicant may not be suitable for appointment references for the next preferred candidate should be immediately sought. If referee checks are to be used to differentiate candidates who present relatively equally, then reference checks will be conducted for each of the candidates under consideration.
- 2.2.10** Referees must be made aware that their response may be viewed by the candidate in accordance with legislation and that they do not have anonymity from the candidate.
- 2.2.11** Referees may be provided with a copy of the advertisement, position description, Mission statement and any other relevant documents, usually by fax or email prior to the discussion. Alternatively the position description and selection criteria may be verbally explained to referees, who are asked to comment on the candidate's attributes against each of the selection criteria. Similar questions should be asked of each referee and the answers documented for reporting to the selection committee. Questions should focus on the candidate's characteristics and experience related to the selection criteria, job performance and work history. Verbal referee checks should be structured and probing and framed in terms of the selection criteria.
- 2.2.12** The referees' comments must be documented and where necessary circulated to selection committee members. A summary of referees' verbal comments for the successful candidate must be attached to the selection committee report.
- 2.2.13** The selection committee may need to reconvene if the referee reports do not support the Committee's initial ranking following interview. This meeting may be held via teleconference or videoconference. In such cases the completion of referee reports for all suitable candidates will be needed to assist the committee's deliberations.

## **2.3 Access to Information**

**2.3.1** Candidates are entitled to know whether personal information about them is held by the University, the nature of the information, the main purposes for which it is used and their entitlements to gain access to it.

**2.3.2** Candidates may request access to the information in the file that relates to them personally. Information about any other candidate may not be accessed.

**2.3.3** Access to personal information includes opportunity for the candidate to inspect records, take notes or obtain a photocopy or computer generated report in the presence of a representative from Human Resources.

## **2.4 Provision of Information and Privacy**

**2.4.1** The University will respond to a candidate's written and signed request for their personal information as soon as practicable.

**2.4.2** The time taken to respond to a candidate's request for access may be influenced by various factors. These may include the method of communication, the type or amount of personal information requested, how the personal information is held, if a third party needs to be consulted and how it is to be provided to the individual making the request.

**2.4.3** Personal information collected from candidates or about candidates through reference checking must only be collected for purposes needed to complete the recruitment and selection functions and activities in line with University policy.

**2.4.4** The Chair is responsible for collecting any copies made of referees reports back from the selection committee members and disposing of them in a lawful and secure manner to protect personal information (original referee reports must be attached to the relevant approval form – see 2.1.9 and 2.2.12).

## **2.5 Disclosure**

**2.5.1** The University will not disclose recruitment or employee files to anyone or any other organisation, unless required to do so in relation to legal proceedings, except for:

- nominated supervisors or Executive Team members responsible for the position,
- members of the selection committee, and
- human resources staff.

## **3. Checklist for Completing Referee Reports**

- Have structured questions against the selection criteria been developed to ask of referees?
- Do the questions avoid matters relating to candidates' private lives or personal characteristics that have no bearing on the requirements for the position?
- Has the Nominated Supervisor, Chair, or nominated member of the selection committee, provided referees with an understanding of the position and selection criteria?
- Have referees' comments been documented?
- Have documented comments been made available to selection committee members? (not applicable for direct appointments)
- Have the referees' reports for the successful candidate been attached to the Selection Committee Report or other relevant approval.

**4. Review of Guidelines**

The University may make changes to these guidelines from time to time to improve their effectiveness. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about these guidelines may forward their suggestions to the Director, Human Resources.

**5. Further Assistance**

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding these Guidelines should first consult their nominated supervisor. Should further advice be needed, they should contact the Human Resources Consultant responsible for their campus.

## 6 Attachment – Referee Report



### REFEREE REPORT

The completion of referee reports is an essential component of the recruitment and selection process and must be performed as soon as potentially appointable candidates have been identified and prior to any offer of employment being made. The objectives of contacting referees is to:

- (1) obtain information about an individual's experience, knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to selection criteria / requirements of the position;
- (2) confirm the accuracy of an individual's work/academic history and performance claims;
- (3) obtain general information and to probe areas in need of clarification or further elaboration.

Candidates are required to provide the full contact details of three work referees. Such referees should be able to speak with authority regarding a candidate's performance (eg. previous supervisor). Candidates should be advised that referee checking is part of our standard recruitment and selection procedures. By providing referee details a candidate is authorising the University to contact only the nominated referees.

One report is to be completed for each Referee.

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#### Privacy Compliance

A person conducting a reference check must inform the referee that:

- The information they provide will only be used for the purposes necessary to recruitment and selection functions and activities at Australian Catholic University.
- The provision of information requested is voluntary and may be disclosed to the nominated supervisor or senior staff member responsible for the position, members of the selection committee (where appropriate) and officers within the Human Resources.
- A candidate can make a written request to view any personal information the University holds about them in the formal recruitment and employee record.
- For further information on the University's Privacy Policy they may refer to the University's website at [www.acu.edu.au](http://www.acu.edu.au)

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<b>Vacant Position</b>		<b>Position Reference</b>	
<b>Base Salary</b>		<b>Classification Level</b>	
<b>Candidate</b>			

<b>Panel Chair or Nominated Supervisor</b>	
<b>Referee's Name &amp; Telephone No.</b>	
<b>Position &amp; Organisation</b>	
<b>Work Relationship to Candidate</b>	
<b>Period of Work Relationship (dates)</b>	

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#### Report on Candidate's Current/Past Employment

Ask for examples where necessary.

<b>Position Title</b>		<b>Period of Employment</b>	
<b>Main Duties</b>			
<b>Overall Work Performance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Commendable <input type="checkbox"/> Competent <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Base <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Comments:		
<b>Supervision</b>	<i>In this position, does/did _____ require close supervision or were they able to work on their own?</i> Comments:		
<b>Lateness/ Absenteeism</b>	<i>Were there ever lateness or absenteeism problems?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Comments:		
<b>Team Work</b>	<i>Could you please comment on _____'s ability to work within a team environment?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Commendable <input type="checkbox"/> Competent <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Base <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Comments:		
<b>Deadlines</b>	<i>Did _____ demonstrate her/his ability to meet deadlines under pressure?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Commendable <input type="checkbox"/> Competent <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Base <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Comments:		
<b>Interpersonal Skills</b>	<i>Please comment on _____'s ability to interact with work colleagues and customers:</i>		
<b>Other</b>	<i>Open ended question specific to the position.</i>		

**Selection Criteria**

Also include specific and appropriate Selection Panel questions in relation to this criteria.

**Essential**

<b>SC1:</b>
Comments:

<b>SC2:</b>
Comments:

<b>SC3:</b>
Comments:

<b>SC4:</b>
Comments:

<b>SC5:</b>
Comments:

<b>SC6:</b>
Comments:

**Desirable**

<b>SC1:</b>
Comments:

<b>SC2:</b>
Comments:

<b>SC3:</b>
Comments:

**Other Comments**

<b>Areas of Expertise/ Strengths</b>	
<b>Areas for Development</b>	
<b>Issues/Concerns</b>	
<b>Reason for Leaving</b>	

<b>Would you re-hire if given the opportunity?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  Why/Why not:
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*Thank you for your time and information.*

**Name of Person Completing Reference Checks:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tick relevant role:**     Chairperson       Panel Member       Nominated Supervisor

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_