



2017 Child Safe Screening & Recruiting Practice

A crucial part of establishing and maintaining a safe environment for children is ensuring that the most suitable people are recruited to work and volunteer with children, and that unsuitable people are screened out.

The following steps will help ensure child safety through pre-engagement screening:

1. **Implement robust recruitment and selection procedures.**

Implementing robust recruitment and selection procedures will help MMuDS to identify the most suitable people for any given role. This becomes crucial in roles that involve working with children, where strong procedures will also act to deter unsuitable people from applying for any paid or voluntary position.

Recruitment and selection (ie audition) policies, protocols, guidelines and procedures will reflect MMuDS understanding of and commitment to a child-safe environment. During the recruitment process, candidates should be provided with access to MMuDS Child-Safe Statement and Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Clearly articulating acceptable behaviour from the very start of a person's involvement with MMuDS will communicate to candidates that the organisation is committed to child safety.

2. **Ensure position descriptions and advertisements have a clear child-safe message**

- MMuDS is committed to child safety. We have zero tolerance of child abuse.
- **Stated clearly on our website:**
MMuDS is committed to child safety. We have zero tolerance of child abuse. Our robust recruitment and vetting practices are strictly adhered to.

3. **Recruiting and auditioning**

The MMuDS Committee's first step in preparing to recruit or making a decision to engage someone for a position that involves contact with children is to undertake an analysis of the position. It is crucial to know and understand the exact skills required and the potential risk posed to children. This will allow MMuDS to develop a clear position description that defines the roles, tasks, and desirable skills and experience required.

Analysing the position will also help MMuDS develop key selection criteria. These will form the measures against which we assess each applicant during the recruitment process. Interview questions will be formulated based on the selection criteria and risk analysis.

An explicit statement of commitment to child safety will be included in all advertisements and position descriptions to discourage unsuitable people from applying; for example:

It is recommended that recruitment of key roles be conducted, where possible, to provide for a diversity of viewpoints and opinions.

The primary challenge of an interview/audition is to gain an accurate sense of who the candidate is, their values and attitudes, and how they are likely to perform in the position. It follows, then, that the interview should include a range of behavioural and values-based questions designed to elicit information that will help the panel determine the candidate's suitability for the position and uncover any potential risks to children.

Ensure each interview includes:

- Discussion of the candidate's motivation for working on a particular event or show that includes children;
- Exploration of the candidate's understanding of child abuse in institutional settings, including their understanding of how it occurs and what can be done to prevent it; and
- Exploration of the candidate's work history, including prior positions held, their responsibilities, and their reasons for leaving (especially where the candidate's previous roles involved working

with children).

The Audition Panel and/or Committee should:

- Pay particular attention to any answers that suggest a lack of professional boundaries around working with children (for example, lax social media boundaries);
- Probe further if the candidate's answers are incomplete or concerning, and cross check any concerns with referees and LinkedIn contacts; and
- Consider whether there is an unusual context for this candidate to be seeking engagement with children.

4. Working with Children Check

The WWCC scheme is designed to help MMuDS assess the level of risk an applicant may pose to children.

However, as was made abundantly clear by the federal Royal Commission, working with children checks should only be one part of an organisation's recruitment, selection and screening practices. A working with children check will not make an organisation a safe place for children – they must be used alongside broader child-safe strategies.

WWCCs involve checking a person's criminal history and, in some jurisdictions, disciplinary information to determine their suitability to engage in child-related work. Successful applicants are granted a clearance, which they can use as evidence of their suitability to engage in child-related work for a specified period.

WWCCs are used in New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia.

Working With Children Checks are required for the following people in MMuDS activities involving children:

- Committee Members
- Director
- Co-Director
- Assistant Director
- Stage Manager
- Makeup Manager
- Dressers
- Costume Fitters
- Choreographers
- Bio Box 'Manager'
- Contractors ie stage-craft trainers
- Other roles as deemed necessary by the MMuDS Committee for any particular show

5. Child Safe Volunteer Contract

All adults across the whole production to sign the:

- MMuDS Child Safe Volunteer Contract.
- MMuDS Statement of Commitment to Child Safety