



# **EAST PRESTON ISLAMIC COLLEGE**

## **STUDENT SAFETY RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY**

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April 2023

# STUDENT SAFETY RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

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| <b>Last Review:</b> April 2023  | <b>Constructed / Reviewed by:</b> East Preston Islamic College on advice from Russell Kennedy Lawyers |
| <b>Next Review:</b> April 2025 (and every two years thereafter in accordance with the College’s review cycle, or more frequently as required) | <b>Approval Required:</b> Board Motion  |
|   | <b>Board Sign Off Date:</b> 15 May 2023<br><b>Implementation Date:</b> April 2023                     |

## 1 Statement of Context and Purpose

- 1.1 East Preston Islamic College (the **College**) is committed to continuous improvement in the quality of the organisation through the recruitment of high calibre staff at all levels, and maintaining a consistent recruitment and selection process that applies the principle of merit-based selection. This consists of an assessment of overall level of skill, knowledge, experience and relevant qualifications, in accordance with the requirements of the Position Description. The methods used to assess the most suitable candidates may include but are not limited to: interviews, reference checks, classroom observation lessons and capability-based assessments including psychometric testing.
- 1.2 The College is committed to recruitment practices that do not discriminate and are in compliance with all relevant legislation, in particular, anti-discrimination and student safety laws. All persons undertaking a recruitment process must have sufficient understanding of these laws and must seek appropriate assistance from the College to ensure these obligations are met.
- 1.3 The College will recruit new staff fairly and on the basis of merit – that is, the person who is the best person for the job.
- 1.4 The purpose of this policy is to establish an employment practices framework that gives effect to these objectives.

## 2 Application

- 1.1 This policy applies to all activities and services provided by the College, including the Early Learning Centre, and a reference to the College is taken to include all of those activities and services.
- 2.1 This policy applies to all Board members, the Principal, employees, volunteers, contractors and other authorised personnel required to perform functions on the College’s premises, or at College-organised activities and events. Collectively, these individuals are referred to as ‘staff’.

## 3 Related Documents

### Legislation

- 3.1 *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)*
- 3.2 *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- 3.3 *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*
- 3.4 *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*

3.5 *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*

3.6 Ministerial Order 1359

### **Policies**

3.7 Student Safety and Protection Policy

3.8 Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct

3.9 Student Safety Responsibilities

3.10 Student Safety Definitions

3.11 Responding to Student Safety Concerns Policy

## **4 Overarching Recruitment Principles**

4.1 The College is committed to applying the following overarching principles throughout the recruitment process:

### **Strategic alignment**

4.2 The College's recruitment, selection and appointment practices will support the achievement of the College's strategic and operational objectives. Decisions to recruit should be made with regard to workforce planning and the goal of improving the performance and standing of the College.

### **Merit-based**

4.3 The College's merit-based selection methods are to ensure recruitment processes deliver high quality staff and selection decisions that are fair, equitable, transparent and consistent. In this context, merit is defined as the skills, knowledge, qualifications, previous experience and personal attributes that relate to the requirements of the position.

### **Fairness**

4.4 All those involved in the recruitment process should carry out their duties without bias or favouritism. Any potential or perceived conflict of interest between parties in the recruitment process should be declared to the College's human resources department and members of the recruitment panel, and is to be avoided, where practicable.

### **Compliance**

4.5 The College will comply with all relevant federal and state legislation in the recruitment and appointment of staff.

### **Equal opportunity**

4.6 The College values equity and diversity and seeks to embody these values in its staff. The College welcomes applications from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

### **Efficiency and candour**

4.7 The College recognises that timely decision-making can be critical in securing the best possible applicant, and all processes should be conducted without undue delay. All applicants should

be treated with respect and communicated with in a timely manner throughout the recruitment process.

### **Student safety**

- 4.8 The College takes a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviours that jeopardise student safety and wellbeing (including child abuse and reportable conduct). The College regards its student safety and wellbeing responsibilities with the utmost importance and strives to deliver an academic curriculum that promotes the College's values.
- 4.9 The College is committed to student safe recruitment as required by *Ministerial Order No. 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and College Boarding Premises*.
- 4.10 All applicants for positions involving student-related work are informed about the College's student safety and wellbeing framework, including the Student Safety and Protection Policy, Responding to Student Safety Concerns Policy and the Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct. All staff are required to provide evidence of having completed compulsory student safety and wellbeing training and other training as required before commencing at the College.

## **5 Advertising the Position**

### **Position description**

- 5.1 A position description is to be prepared for vacant positions. The position description will describe:
- (a) The nature of the position.
  - (b) Essential duties and requirements.
  - (c) The College's core values, including *Learning, Achievement, Respect, Commitment and Fairness*. Key selection criteria (including personal attributes, skills, experience and qualifications, as well as any desired skills and abilities).
  - (d) Where the role involves child-connected work, will contain:
    - (1) A clear statement that sets out the position's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding student safety and wellbeing.
    - (2) The essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to student safety and wellbeing required to fulfil the position.

### **Student safety screening**

- 5.2 All applications will be responded to with an acknowledgement of receipt email.
- 5.3 Resumes will be screened against the position description so that assessments can be made of the applicant's suitability for the role.
- 5.4 Screening requirements will depend on the role that is being applied for, whether the position is for an employee, volunteer, or contractor position and whether the College has completed the screening requirements in this policy for the applicant in the past 12 months.

### **Prospective staff**

- 5.5 Suitable applicants for an employee position must:

- (a) Hold, and provide the College with evidence of, a current valid VIT registration or Working with Children Check (**WWCC**) clearance status (or similar check).
- (b) Provide the College with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required).
- (c) Have a current National Police Check or be willing to obtain one prior to, and/or during the course of their employment. Please note that a National Police Check forms part of the VIT registration process (whereas a WWCC involves a narrower police check).
- (d) Provide the College with proof of their professional or other qualifications relevant to the role and other experience and attributes relating to student safety and wellbeing.
- (e) Detail and provide to the College their history of student-connected work (or work otherwise involving children).
- (f) Satisfy a reference check that addresses the applicant's suitability for the job and working with students.
- (g) Be informed of, familiar with and agree to abide by the College's policies and student safety framework prior to commencing at the College.

5.6 Suitable applicants are invited to interview.

5.7 Applicants who are not selected for interview are notified by email.

#### Volunteers and Visitors

5.8 All volunteers and visitors must agree to abide by the College's policies and student safety and wellbeing framework prior to commencing at the College.

#### Direct Contact Volunteers

5.9 A direct contact volunteer or visitor means a person who is involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and/or who could potentially have direct contact with students during the normal course of their volunteer service.

5.10 All direct contact volunteers or visitors are subject to student safety screening prior to their engagement by the College and must:

- (a) Hold and provide the College with evidence of, a current valid WWCC clearance status (or any equivalent background check).
- (b) Provide the College with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required).
- (c) Have a current National Police Check or be willing to obtain one prior to commencement.
- (d) Provide the College with certified evidence of their professional or other qualifications relevant to the role.
- (e) Detail and provide to the College their history of student-connected work.
- (f) Where appropriate, satisfy a reference check that addresses the person's suitability to volunteer and work with children and other students (this requirement is a matter

of best practice and is particularly relevant for large-offsite events, overnight excursions and camps).

#### Indirect Contact Volunteers

- 5.11 An indirect contact volunteer or visitor means a person who is involved in providing support and services at the College whilst not directly assisting a child or specific group of students. For example, this would include a person assisting with College administration functions.
- 5.12 All indirect contact volunteers or visitors are subject to student safety screening prior to their engagement by the College and must:
- (a) Hold, and provide the College with evidence of, a current valid WWCC clearance status (or similar check).
  - (b) Provide the College with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required).

#### Third Party Contractors

- 5.13 Third party contractor(s) include maintenance and building personnel, consultants, tutors, sports coaches and cleaners who attend the College, or other activities and events associated with the College, for the purpose of performing contracted services.
- 5.14 Where a third-party contractor could have direct or indirect contact with students during the ordinary course of providing their services to the College, they will be subjected to the equivalent screening processes for volunteers.

#### Interviews

- 5.15 Applicants are typically interviewed by at least two staff members and at least one interview is face to face (where possible).
- 5.16 Personal relationships do not influence our recruitment and selection process because recruitment and selection decisions are based on merit and not personal relationships.
- 5.17 The purpose of an interview is to provide and obtain information that will assist in making a decision about an applicant's suitability for the role.
- 5.18 Interview questions will include those from the following categories:
- (a) **Technical** - used to determine the skills and qualifications of the applicant.
  - (b) **Behavioural** – past behaviour indicates future behaviour.
  - (c) **Cultural** – to assess a fit with the College's vision and values of *Learning, Achievement, Respect, Commitment and Fairness*.
- 5.19 Interview questions also relate to the applicant's work history, skills and attributes as well as addressing selection criteria for the role. Interview questions are not discriminatory.
- 5.20 During the interview, applicants are provided information about the College, particularly, the College's focus on student safety and wellbeing.
- 5.21 The recruitment panel will make detailed notes of the interview.
- 5.22 Suitable applicants may be invited to attend a second interview with a senior member of staff.

5.23 Interviewed applicants who are not subsequently selected are notified.

## **6 Background Checks and Required Certification**

6.1 All appointments (including those involving child-connected work) will be conditional on the presentation of:

- (a) Evidence that all screening checks required have been satisfied (refer to the section on student safety screening requirements above), which depending on the position may include:
  - (1) Evidence of current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching or a current WWCC clearance (whichever is applicable).
  - (2) A satisfactory National Police Check.
  - (3) Proof of personal identity (at least 100 points of identification).
- (b) Proof of any professional or other qualifications (including if applicable, evidence that a teacher is suitably qualified and experienced to deliver a senior secondary course).
- (c) Evidence of the person's history of work involving children and young people.
- (d) Completion of psychometric testing and/or technical skills testing, which the College may require applicants to undertake from time to time.

6.2 The College will verify and keep appropriate records regarding the above information.

## **7 Reference Checking**

7.1 The College will require at least two references from former and current employers of the applicant.

7.2 The College's reference checking process also involves enquiries about the applicant's suitability for working with students, or student—connected work, including in a school-specific context.

7.3 Permission from the applicant to contact any nominated referees and to perform a full employment background check must be obtained during the interview.

7.4 All notes taken during the recruitment process (including the interview and reference check) will be placed on the staff member's file if the applicant is successful.

7.5 If a reference cannot be undertaken until the preferred applicant resigns from their current position, any employment offer will be made subject to the satisfactory completion of reference check.

## **8 Entitlement to Work in Australia**

8.1 All applicants must provide valid documentation of their right to work in Australia. It is the applicant's responsibility to advise the College of visa expiry dates.

8.2 An applicant's citizenship or other immigration/visa status will be considered only as required by applicable laws and regulations for employment.

## **9 Pre-employment Medical Requirements**

### **Pre-employment health declarations**

9.1 Legislation requires that the College must:

- (a) Ask the applicant, in writing, to disclose any pre-existing injury or illness that could be affected by the nature of the proposed duties.
- (b) Explain, in writing, to the applicant that a failure to disclose, or a misleading disclosure concerning pre-existing injuries or illnesses may result in a loss of entitlement to workers compensation, should the injury recur.

9.2 To meet this requirement, new employees (which includes ex-employees returning to the College) are required to complete a pre-employment health declaration prior to commencing employment.

### **Pre-employment medical assessments**

9.3 The College may require an applicant to undergo a pre-employment medical assessment.

9.4 This will occur if the College forms the view that it is prudent to independently confirm a prospective recruit's medical fitness to perform the duties that relate to the role that the prospective employee is applying for. Such an assessment will be conducted by a registered medical practitioner of the College's choice.

9.5 If the registered medical practitioner is unable to recommend employment of the applicant, the College may withdraw the offer of employment (if the offer has already been made).

## **10 Ensuring Student Safety Post Recruitment**

### **Regular screening practices and obligations to disclose**

10.1 The College will review the currency of VIT registration and WWCC clearances annually (or more frequently as required).

10.2 All staff are required to immediately notify the College if their VIT registration or WWCC clearance (or similar check), is suspended, cancelled or otherwise under investigation.

10.3 All staff are prohibited from engaging in student-connected work in the absence of a valid VIT registration or WWCC clearance (or similar check).

### **Induction**

10.4 The College requires all staff to undergo appropriate induction (relevant to the nature of the role) upon commencement at the College, including in relation to the student safety and wellbeing framework (including the Student Safety and Protection Policy, Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct and Responding to Student Safety Concerns Policy) and the College's record retention procedures to ensure awareness of staff responsibilities to students and also, recordkeeping obligations.

10.5 Prior to commencing at the College, all volunteers and third-party contractors must undergo appropriate induction, and be provided with the College's key student safety and wellbeing policies and related policies and procedures.

10.6 Once staff, volunteers or contractors have completed the College's induction program, this will be recorded by the College and stored for record keeping purposes.



### **Supervision, monitoring and assessment**

- 10.7 The College requires that staff act professionally, and in a way that embodies the College's commitment to student safety.
- 10.8 The College's student safety framework is available on the College's website and internal management system, Compass and includes the Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct, Responding to Student Safety Concerns Policy and the Student Safety and Protection Policy.
- 10.9 Staff will otherwise be subject to regular supervision, monitoring, performance reviews and assessment, to ensure their ongoing suitability for student-connected work. This will be managed by the Leadership Team, and will include:
- (a) Effective use of probation periods and annual performance reviews for staff, which shall include an assessment of a staff member's continuing suitability for student-connected work.
  - (b) Ensuring staff receive training on implementing the Student Safety Staff Code of Conduct, Student Safety and Protection Policy, building culturally safe environments for children and young people, recognising indicators of harm (including that caused by other children and young people) and responding effectively to student safety issues and concerns, and supporting colleagues who disclose harm.
  - (c) Ensuring staff receive guidance on their information sharing and recordkeeping obligations, as well as how to identify and mitigate student safety and wellbeing risks in a College environment (both physical and online) without compromising a student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
  - (d) Ensuring staff receive ongoing student safety training that is tailored to the relevant needs of staff and volunteers, and factors in the complexity of child-connected work undertaken at the College.
  - (e) Ensuring staff are aware of, understand and respect student's individual needs and differences (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, LGBTQIA+ students and students who are unable to live at home).
  - (f) Monitoring staff to ensure their behaviour towards students is appropriate and to ensure compliance with the College's student safety policies.
  - (g) Appropriate levels of supervision for all staff, and in particular staff and volunteers who have direct contact with students.
  - (h) Acting on concerns which are raised in accordance with Responding to Student Safety Concerns Policy, as applicable.
  - (i) Taking appropriate disciplinary action where a staff member is found to have acted contrary to the College's student safety framework.
- 10.10 In addition to appropriate training at induction, periodic refresher training will also occur for staff to ensure ongoing understanding of their legal and professional obligations.
- 10.11 This includes supervision, monitoring and assessment to ensure that teaching staff have the relevant skills, qualifications and experience to teach at the College.
- 10.12 At least annually, the College will ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to Board members and staff about:

- (a) Individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse and reportable conduct.
- (b) Child abuse and reportable conduct risks in the College environment (both physical and online).
- (c) The College's current student safety framework.

10.13 Relevant information and details of modules completed by each member of staff is recorded and stored for record keeping purposes.

10.14 The Principal will be responsible for keeping the Board informed (via the Principal's report or otherwise, periodic updates) regarding any matters which relate to a staff member's continuing suitability for student-connected work, or which otherwise concern the appropriateness of the College's arrangements for ensuring that staff engaged in student-connected work perform appropriately in relation to student safety and wellbeing (and in particular student safety).

10.15 The Board will ensure that privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to student concerns and complaints.

## **11 Privacy and Confidentiality**

11.1 Privacy legislation impacts the entire recruitment process, as applicants may seek to access any information relating to their application. This may include any notes made on their resume, any notes made during their interview and any information recorded after speaking with their referees.

11.2 All information obtained about an applicant as part of the recruitment process is confidential, and must not be distributed without authority of the College.

11.3 Consent to a full employment background check should be obtained from a prospective employee during the interview.

## **12 Breach of this Policy**

12.1 The College emphasises the need to comply with the requirements of this policy. Any staff found to be in breach of the requirements of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Staff should refer to the Employee Code of Conduct for further information.

12.2 To properly implement this policy, all the College's staff must ensure that they will abide by this policy and assist the College in the implementation of this policy.

## **13 Communication and Implementation**

13.1 This policy is available to staff as part of the College's and the Board's internal policies and procedures. Aspects of (and updates to) the College's student safety and wellbeing framework, including this policy will be addressed in the College's professional development updates, training programs, bulletins and newsletters.

13.2 To properly implement this policy:

- (a) The Board will review the College's student safe practices at least every two years (or more frequently after a significant student safety incident) and improve where applicable.

- (b) All staff must ensure that they abide by this policy and assist the College in implementing this policy.