



Student Safety and Wellbeing – Recruitment and Employment Policy

Last Review: 5 th June 2026	Constructed: Russell Kennedy Lawyers.
	Reviewed by: Executive
Next Review: 5 th June 2027 (and every two years thereafter in accordance with TKS's review cycle, or more frequently as required)	Approval Required: Board
	Board Sign Off Date: 23 rd June 2026

1 Statement of Context and Purpose

The Knox School ("TKS") 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 not be limited to, interviews, reference checks, classroom observation lessons and capability-based assessments including psychometric testing.

TKS 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 TKS to ensure these obligations are met.

TKS will recruit new staff fairly and based on merit – that is, the candidate who is the best person for the job.

The purpose of this policy is to establish an employment practices framework that gives effect to these objectives.

Global Student Safety Mandate:

All recruitment and employment practices at The Knox School (TKS) must explicitly prioritise student safety and wellbeing. Individual capability, qualifications, and safety screening are assessed at every stage of the lifecycle below. For detailed compliance rules, indicators of harm, and ongoing training frameworks, see Section 30 (Overarching Recruitment Principles) and Section 155 (Ensuring Student Safety Post Recruitment)

2 Summary

End-to-end recruitment lifecycle

Please follow these eight sequential phases for every standard recruitment process:

2.1 Prepare Position Description:

Phase 1

Draft a comprehensive position description detailing the nature of the role, essential duties, values, and key selection criteria. If the role involves child-connected work, it must explicitly outline specific student safety requirements and responsibilities.

2.2 Advertise Role:

Phase 2

Publicly market the vacant position. All recruitment advertisements must feature a clear, mandatory statement setting out the school's zero-tolerance stance on child abuse and the occupant's essential qualifications and attributes regarding student safety.

2.3 Screen Applications:

Phase 3

Acknowledge all applications and screen resumes against the position description. Perform initial validation to ensure candidates hold a current, valid Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration or Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance status.

2.4 Conduct Interviews:

Phase 4

Convene a recruitment panel of at least two staff members to conduct an interview (face-to-face where possible). Use technical, behavioural, and cultural questions to objectively assess merit, values alignment, and suitability for working with students.

2.5 Complete Reference Checks:

Phase 5

Obtain applicant permission during the interview to contact at least two former or current employers. Conduct targeted reference checks that explicitly address the applicant's historical suitability for student-connected work and safe environment practices.

2.6 Verify Documents:

Phase 6

Collect and formally verify mandatory credentials. This includes sighting a minimum of 100 points of personal identification, certified proof of professional qualifications, a satisfactory National Police Check, and right-to-work documentation.

2.7 Make Conditional Offer:

Phase 7

Issue an employment agreement. All formal offers of employment remain strictly conditional upon the successful verification of all screening checks, references, signed pre-employment health declarations, and any required medical fitness assessments.

2.8 Complete Induction and Training:

Phase 8

Ensure all newly appointed staff, volunteers, and contractors complete the compulsory TKS induction program prior to commencement. This includes passing mandatory student safety modules, reviewing the Staff Code of Conduct, and logging completed records in Synergetic.

3 Application

This policy applies to all Board members, the Principal, employees, volunteers, contractors, labour hire workers, secondees, homestay providers, approved student support providers and other authorised personnel who offer facilities or services to TKS, or are required to perform functions on TKS's premises, or at School-organised activities and events. Collectively, these individuals are referred to as '**staff**'.

Any concerns or discrepancies identified during the screening or reference check stages must be immediately escalated to People & Culture (Human Resources) or the Principal before any further steps are taken in the recruitment process.

4 Related Documents

4.1 Legislation

- *Crimes Act 1958*(Vic)
- *Worker Screening Act 2020*(Vic)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*(Vic)
- *Fair Work Act 2009*(Cth)
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*(Vic)
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*(Vic)
- Ministerial Order No. 1359 Policies
- VRQA Guidelines of the Enrolment of Overseas Students Aged Under 18 Years
- National Code of Practice of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

4.2 Policies

- Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy - ELC
- Student Safety and Wellbeing – Staff Code of Conduct

- Student Safety and Wellbeing – Raising and Responding to Concerns Policy
- Student Safety and Wellbeing – Record Retention Policy

5 Overarching Recruitment Principles (Section 30)

TKS is committed to applying the following overarching principles throughout the recruitment process:

Strategic alignment

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

Merit based

TKS'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, suitability, previous experience and personal attributes that relate to the requirements of the position.

Fairness

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 People & Culture (Human Resources) and Panel Members and is to be avoided, where practicable.

Compliance

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

Equal opportunity

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

Efficiency and candour

TKS 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

TKS takes a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviours that jeopardise student safety (including child abuse and reportable conduct). TKS regards its student safety responsibilities with the utmost importance and strives to deliver an academic curriculum that promotes TKS's values.

TKS 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 Boarding Premises*.

TKS is also committed to ensuring that its recruitment of approved student support providers and homestay families is consistent with the requirements under Ministerial Order No. 1359 and the *VRQA Guidelines for the Enrolment of Overseas Students Aged Under 18 and the Child Safe Standards*.

All applicants for positions involving student-related work are informed about TKS's Student Safety Framework, including the Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Student Safety and Wellbeing – Raising and Responding to Concerns Policy, Student Safety and Wellbeing – Staff Code of Conduct and Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy – ELC. All staff (including but not limited to Board members) are required to provide evidence of having completed compulsory student safety training and other training as required before commencing at TKS.

6 Advertising the Position

Position Description

A position description is to be prepared for vacant positions. The position description will describe:

- The nature of the position.
- Essential duties and requirements.
- Key selection criteria (including personal attributes, skills, experience and qualifications, as well as any desired skills and abilities).
- TKS's values.
- Where the role involves child-connected work, will contain:
 - A clear statement that sets out the position's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding student safety.
 - The essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to student safety required to fulfil the position.

Student safety screening

All applications will be responded to with an acknowledgement of receipt email.

Resumes will be screened against the position description so that initial assessments can be made of the applicant's suitability for the role.

Screening requirements will depend on the role that is being applied for, and whether the position is for an employee, volunteer, labour hire, secondee or contractor position.

TKS will collect and keep a record of all relevant documentation obtained or sighted when screening a prospective staff member's (as defined earlier in this policy) suitability for a role at TKS on its online management system, Synergetic (or otherwise, in hard copy or digital email file prior to being uploaded to Synergetic) in accordance with all applicable laws relating to privacy, including the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

Prospective staff

Suitable applicants for an employee position must:

- Hold, and provide TKS with evidence of, a current valid VIT registration or Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance status.
- Provide TKS with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required).
- 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 clearance involves a narrower police check).
- Provide TKS with proof of their professional or other essential or relevant qualifications for the role and other experience and attributes relating to student safety and wellbeing.
- Detail and provide to TKS their history of student-connected work.
- Satisfy a reference check that addresses the applicant's suitability for the position and working with students.
- Be informed of, familiar with and agree to abide by TKS's policies and student safety framework prior to commencing at TKS. Suitable applicants are invited to interview.

Applicants who do not meet screening or safety requirements will not be appointed under any circumstances.

Volunteers

All volunteers must agree to abide by TKS's policies and student safety framework prior to commencing at TKS.

All volunteers must present their WWCC number at Reception when signing in using the VPass digital sign-in. Records of this are kept by the School.

Direct contact volunteers

A direct contact volunteer 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.

All direct contact volunteers are subject to student safety screening prior to their engagement by TKS and must:

- Hold and provide TKS with evidence of a current valid WWCC clearance status (or similar check).
- Provide TKS with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required).
- Have a current National Police Check or be willing to obtain one prior to commencement.

- Provide TKS with certified evidence of their professional or other qualifications relevant to the role.
- Detail and provide to TKS their history of student-connected work.
- View relevant student safety documentation, including the Student Safety Handbook, Student Safety Induction Presentation and TKS Parent Volunteer Guidelines, and complete the TKS Student Safety Declaration Form. 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).
- Comply with any additional screening requirements implemented by TKS (i.e. in the Homestay Information Handbook).

Indirect contact volunteers

An indirect contact volunteer means a person who is involved in providing support and services at TKS whilst not directly assisting a child or specific group of students. For example, this would include a person assisting with school administration functions.

All indirect contact volunteers are subject to student safety screening prior to their engagement by TKS and must:

- Hold and provide TKS with evidence of a current valid WWCC clearance status.
- Provide TKS with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required).

Third party contractors

Third party contractor(s) include maintenance and building personnel, consultants, tutors, support providers, VET providers, sports coaches and cleaners who either attend TKS, or other activities and events associated with TKS, for the purpose of performing contracted services or provide TKS with access to their facilities

Where a third-party contractor could have direct or indirect contact with students during the ordinary course of providing their services to TKS, they will be subjected to the equivalent screening processes for volunteers. Child-facing contractors must present their WWCC number at Reception when signing in using the VPass digital sign-in. Records of this are kept by the School.

Interviews

Applicants are typically interviewed by at least two staff members and at least one interview is face to face (where possible).

Personal relationships do not influence TKS's recruitment and selection process because recruitment and selection decisions are based on merit and not personal relationships.

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.

Interview questions will include those from the following categories:

- Technical – used to determine the skills and qualifications of the applicant.
- Behavioural – past behaviour indicates future behaviour.
- Cultural – to assess a fit with TKS’s vision, ethos and values of *Achievement, Care, Empathy, Resilience, Responsibility and Respect*.

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.

During the interview, applicants are provided information about TKS, particularly, TKS’s focus on student safety and wellbeing.

The recruitment panel will make detailed notes of the interview.

Suitable applicants may be invited to attend a second interview with a senior member of staff. Interviewed applicants who are not subsequently selected are notified.

7 Background Checks and Required Certifications

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

- Evidence that all screening checks required have been satisfied (refer above), which depending on the position, may include:
 - Evidence of current registration with the VIT.
 - A satisfactory National Police Check.
 - A current WWCC.
 - Proof of personal identity (at least 100 points of identification).
- Proof of any professional or other qualifications (including if applicable, evidence that a teacher is suitably qualified and experienced to deliver a junior school/ senior school course);
- Evidence of the person's history of work involving children and young people.
- Completion of psychometric testing and/or technical skills testing, which TKS may require candidates to undertake from time to time.

TKS will verify and keep appropriate records regarding the above information.

8 Reference Checking

TKS will require at least two references from former and current employers of the applicant. TKS’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.

Permission from the applicant to contact any nominated referees and to perform a full employment background check, should they be the preferred candidate, must be obtained during the interview.

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.

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

9 Entitlement to Work in Australia

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

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

10 Pre-Employment Medical Requirements

Pre-employment health declarations

Legislation requires that TKS must:

- Ask the applicant, in writing, to disclose any pre-existing injury or illness that could be affected by the nature of the proposed duties.
- 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.

To meet this requirement, new staff (which include ex-employees returning to TKS) are required to complete a pre-employment health declaration prior to commencing employment.

Pre-employment medical assessments

TKS may require an applicant to undergo a pre-employment medical assessment.

This will occur if TKS 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 staff member is applying for. Such an assessment will be conducted by a registered medical practitioner of TKS's choice.

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

11 Ensuring Student Safety Post Recruitment (Section 155)

Regular screening practices and obligations to disclose

TKS will review the currency of VIT registration and WWCC clearances (or similar checks) annually (or more frequently as required).

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

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

TKS requires all staff to undergo appropriate induction upon commencement at TKS, including in relation to the student safety framework (including the Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Student Safety and Wellbeing - Staff Code of Conduct, Student Safety and Wellbeing – Raising and Responding to Student Concerns Policy and Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy - ELC).

Prior to commencing at TKS, all volunteers, Board members and third-party contractors must undergo appropriate induction, and be provided with TKS's key student safety policies and related policies and procedures. The induction process for incoming Board members must also address the requirement for TKS's governing body to:

- ensure that all people working at TKS are suited to do so and reflect TKS's student safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- ensure that recruitment advertisements for staff have a clear statement that sets out:
 - the jobs requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding student safety and wellbeing; and
 - the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to the student safety and wellbeing.
- otherwise comply with its obligations relating to suitable staff and volunteers under clause 10 of *Ministerial Order No. 1359*.

Once staff, Board members, volunteers, labour hire workers, secondees or contractors have completed TKS's induction program (which will be relevant to the role in question), this will be recorded by TKS and stored for record keeping purposes.

Supervision, monitoring and assessment

All staff

TKS requires that staff act professionally, and in a way that embodies TKS's commitment to student safety.

TKS's student safety framework is available on TKS's staff portal, and includes the Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Student Safety and Wellbeing - Staff Code of Conduct, Student Safety and Wellbeing – Raising and Responding to Concerns Policy, and the Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy - ELC.

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 Executive Team, and will include:

- Effective use of probation periods and annual performance reviews for staff (or where applicable, site or accommodation visits), which shall include an assessment of a staff member's continuing suitability for student-connected work.
- Ensuring staff and volunteers receive training on implementing the 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. Ensuring staff (as defined earlier in this policy) receive training on TKS's record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.

- Ensuring staff and, where appropriate, volunteers 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 TKS (including with regard to TKS's international students).
- Ensuring staff are aware of, understand and respect student's individual needs and differences (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, international students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, LGBTIQ+ students and students who are unable to live at home).
- Monitoring staff to ensure their behaviour towards students is appropriate and to ensure compliance with TKS's student safety policies.
- Appropriate levels of supervision for all staff, and in particular staff and volunteers who have direct contact with students.
- Acting on concerns which are raised in accordance with the Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Student Safety and Wellbeing – Staff Code of Conduct, Student Safety and Wellbeing– Raising and Responding to Student Safety Concerns Policy and Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy - ELC.
- Taking appropriate disciplinary action where a staff member is found to have acted contrary to TKS's student safety framework.

In addition to appropriate training at induction, periodic refresher training will also occur for staff and relevant volunteers to ensure ongoing understanding of their legal and professional obligations. The purpose of the training is to equip staff and volunteers with the knowledge, skills and awareness required to keep students safe and otherwise provide information that is relevant with regard to the nature and responsibilities of the staff or volunteer's role. This includes annual Mandatory Reporting (MARAM) Training. This includes supervision, monitoring and assessment to ensure that teaching staff have the relevant skills, qualifications and experience to teach at TKS.

At least annually, TKS will ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to Board members and staff about:

- Individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse and reportable conduct.
- Child abuse and reportable conduct risks in TKS environment.
- TKS's current student safety framework.

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

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 TKS's arrangements for ensuring that staff engaged in student-connected work perform appropriately in relation to student safety (and in particular student safety).

TKS's International Student Program

In addition to the supervision, monitoring and assessment requirements for all staff (as set out above), further training requirements apply to the International Student Co-ordinator and those support staff involved in TKS's International Student Program.

Such staff will complete targeted training which covers:

- The Child Safe Standards.
- TKS's policies and procedures for managing emergency situations and critical incidents.
- Policies and procedures for verifying that an international student's accommodation is appropriate to the student's age and needs.
- Relevant requirements in the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 – as amended or replaced from time to time.
- The VRQA Guidelines for the Enrolment of Overseas Students Aged Under 18 Years.
- The VRQA Minimum Standards and any other VRQA guidelines that are issued from time to time.

Specific training for relevant staff involved in TKS's International Program is provided through a combination of methods, which includes but is not limited to online modules, internal training and external training (through providers such as the VRQA, ISANA (International Student Advisers Network of Australia), and Vision International).

12 Privacy and Confidentiality

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. All information obtained about an applicant as part of the recruitment process is confidential and must not be distributed without authority of TKS. Consent to a full employment background check should be obtained from the prospective staff member during the interview.

13 Consequences of a Breach of this Policy

TKS 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.

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

14 Communication and Implementation

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

To properly implement this policy:

- It will be reviewed and endorsed every two years, or more frequently if required.
- All staff, volunteers, labour hire workers, secondees and contractors must ensure that they understand and abide by this policy and assist TKS in implementing this policy.