

# Employment Screening Policy

Date: February 2022



## 1. Policy statement

The Audit Office of New South Wales (Audit Office) is committed to ensuring due diligence, equity and fairness in its selection, screening and appointment of existing and prospective employees and contractors.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all permanent, temporary and potential employees of the Audit Office as well as those contracted through a recruitment agency.

## 3. Requirements

This policy sets out the requirements for effective employment screening for pre-employment, as well as existing employee screening if a declaration is made under the Code of Conduct or a risk assessment for a role requires a specific check.

The level of screening conducted on an individual for the role to be performed will be equal to the level of risk posed by that role.

Higher risk roles identified through the risk management process, will be required to undergo additional specific checks.

The requirement for honest and full disclosure during the employment screening process is a condition of initial and ongoing employment at the Audit Office. All employees or candidates required to undertake checks completed by an external body, such as a National Criminal Record Check (NCRC), bankruptcy check or academic record check must provide their consent for the check to be undertaken. Any person refusing to provide consent could be precluded from employment or (if a current employee) may face disciplinary action.

## 4. Pre-employment screening

Pre-employment screening will be conducted in accordance with relevant legislation and with the informed consent of the individual.

The following checks will be undertaken to verify the identity, integrity and credentials of all new appointments:

### 4.1 Identity

To confirm an individual's identity, an identification check will be undertaken for each individual.

The Audit Office requires that an individual provide photo identification, such as a driver's licence, identification card issued by the Australian government or passport to verify identification. The original of this identification needs to be sighted and a copy placed on the individual's personnel file.

As part of the National Criminal Record Check (NCRC), an individual must provide 100 points of identification to an external provider for the purpose of conducting the required NCRC (refer to 4.2 (c)).

### 4.2 Integrity

The following checks will be conducted for individuals:

#### a) Resume

An individual's resume (or curriculum vitae) will be reviewed to ensure that there are no unexplained gaps or anomalies with their employment history

**b) Reference checks**

Reference checks will be undertaken to verify employment history credentials and suitability for employment at the Audit Office.

**c) National criminal record check (NCRC)**

Employment with the Audit Office is conditional on an individual obtaining a satisfactory NCRC to ensure they have no criminal history that could impact their ability to suitably perform the inherent requirements of their role.

A NCRC is an Australia-wide check of a person's criminal history, which may be in the form of a 'National Police Certificate' or 'Police Certificate' prepared by the Australian Federal Police, a State or Territory police service, or an accredited agency. In circumstances of urgent workforce demand an individual may commence work pending a satisfactory NCRC on the basis that a statutory declaration is completed and approved by the Deputy Auditor-General.

An offence history will not necessarily preclude employment. An offence listed on the Certificate will affect a prospective employee's role at the Audit Office only to the extent that it is judged to negatively affect that person's ability to carry out the inherent requirements of the role for which they are being recruited. In the event of a listed offence, the Deputy Auditor-General will consider the information and decide on how to proceed.

Applicants who hold dual/multiple permanent residency or citizenship will be required to complete a statutory declaration stating they have no pending criminal charges or convictions from any country they have been citizens/ permanent residents since turning 16. If they have a criminal record, they must list the date of offence, type of offence and court outcome. Additional criminal record checks may be required.

**d) Residency check**

All applicants to permanent positions at the Audit Office are required to be Australian or New Zealand citizens, or Australian permanent residents.

Upon commencement, employees are required to provide evidence of their residency by providing their passport, birth certificate, citizenship certificate or other proof of permanent residency.

Anyone employed on a temporary basis without citizenship or permanent residency, or those permanent employees unable to provide any of the aforementioned documents are required to have a right to work in Australia check undertaken, conducted through Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO). If an employee's right to work in Australia changes for any reason it is the employee's responsibility to ensure they notify the Audit Office immediately.

**e) Additional checks**

Additional employment checks may be required based on a risk assessment for the role. Refer to Attachment A for the additional employment checks required for identified high-risk roles. These checks may include the following checks conducted by an external body:

- bankruptcy check
- formal qualifications check or experience/ employment verification.

### **4.3 Credentials**

Human Resources will verify the individual's academic qualifications or relevant experience, and professional memberships that are an essential requirement as per the role description.

- a) A formal qualification check ensures there is documentary evidence of the completion of the qualification from an accredited institution (e.g. an original academic transcript showing completion of requirements for the relevant course or certified copy). This applies to

individual's whose engagement with the Audit Office is made contingent on having obtained specific qualifications. A HR team member will sight the qualifications on their first day of employment.

For Office Executive level appointments, an external body will be engaged to provide verification of qualifications. A risk assessment may determine that other roles require an external body to also provide this verification.

Qualification checks are not required for contractors or consultants.

- b) Confirmation of professional membership will be required if it is an essential requirement of the role, as defined in the role description.

## 5. Existing employees screening

At the discretion of the Auditor-General or the Deputy Auditor-General, existing employees could be required to undertake a National Criminal Records Check (NCRC), an updated NCRC or specific checks as identified as a result of a risk assessment for their role (refer to Attachment A for the additional employment checks for identified high-risk roles). This can include employees promoted to a role that is deemed a higher risk.

Depending on the role requirements for some roles they may require additional screening such as:

- Working with Children Check (WWCC)
- agency specific security clearances

## 6. Compliance requirements

### 6.1 Code of conduct

The Audit Office of New South Wales Code of Conduct ensures all employees comply with the professional obligations of the office and outlines the expectations around high standards of ethical conduct. The Code of Conduct is supported by Audit Office policies. If an employee has been convicted or charged with a serious criminal offence, which is punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more, they are required under the Code of Conduct to report this to their manager. The manager is required under the Code of Conduct to act promptly and with due process to prevent and address any breaches of the code, including escalation to the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General or Deputy Auditor-General can elect to conduct an updated National Criminal Record Check (NCRC) on the individual employee as a part of the management of this declaration.

### 6.2 Conflict of interest and professional independence

All employees are required to complete an annual Conflict of Interest and Professional Independence Declaration. In completing the declaration, staff identify and evaluate circumstances and relationships that may create a conflict of interest or threat to professional independence.

### 6.3 Secondary employment

Employees involved in or proposing to engage in a secondary employment, which includes volunteering, are required to complete a Secondary Employment and Volunteering Application form.

## 7. Records Management

For general records management requirements refer to the Audit Office's Records Management Policy.

## 8. Privacy and Confidentiality

The practices outlined in this policy will be followed in accordance with the Audit Office's Privacy Management Plan. Any information obtained from a background check or investigation will be used to

make employment decision only. All information collected as a part of the employment screening process will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

## **9. Roles and responsibilities**

### **9.1 Auditor-General**

The Auditor-General has ultimate ownership of this policy including the delegated authority to make decisions that fall outside of this policy.

### **9.2 Deputy Auditor-General**

The Deputy Auditor-General or delegate are to ensure that the Audit Office has appropriate systems in place to implement this policy.

### **9.3 Human Resources**

Human Resources are to ensure the provision of instruction, information and training is available as necessary to support effective implementation of this policy.

### **9.4 Applicants and Employees**

Applicants and employees are required to comply with the requirements of this policy and inform Human Resources should their personal circumstances change.

## **10. Contact point**

If employees have questions about this policy, they should contact the Executive Manager Human Resources.

## **11. Review**

It is intended that this policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if significant new information, legislative or organisational change warrants an update to the policy.

## Attachment A: Additional checks for identified high-risk roles

A risk assessment has been conducted for roles within the Audit Office. In this assessment, we focused on categories such as decision-making authority, financial delegation, job requirements and financial functions.

The following table identifies roles considered 'high-risk' that require additional employment checks.

Role	Additional employment screening checks	Reasons for high risk
Office Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal qualifications check (external body)</li> <li>Bankruptcy check (external body)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High level of decision-making authority</li> <li>Substantial financial delegation</li> <li>Mandatory qualifications required.</li> </ul>
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal qualifications check (external body)</li> <li>Bankruptcy check (external body)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inherent risk within Finance function</li> <li>High decision-making authority</li> <li>Financial delegation</li> <li>Mandatory qualifications required.</li> </ul>
Director / Corporate Services Executive Managers (excluding CFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal qualifications check (external body)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior leadership role with decision making authority</li> <li>Moderate financial delegation</li> <li>Mandatory qualifications/ experience required.</li> </ul>
Executive Manager, Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal qualifications check or experience/employment verification (external body)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior leadership role with decision making authority</li> <li>Moderate financial delegation</li> <li>Mandatory qualifications/ experience required.</li> </ul>