Recruitment and Selection Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') is committed to attracting, recruiting, retaining and supporting a high performing and diverse workforce to enable the achievement of its strategic, organisational and workforce planning requirements.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This policy outlines the requirements and principles to ensure employee recruitment and selection practices are consistent, merit-based, fair, in accordance with the University's needs and conform with regulatory requirements.

(3) This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

a. People and Culture Recruitment Process;
b. First Nations Workforce Policy;
c. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
d. VET Trainer and Assessor Qualifications, Competency and Industry Currency Procedure;
e. HE Teaching - Professional Experience Equivalence Policy and Procedure; and
f. HE Teaching - Staff Qualifications and Scholarship Procedure.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This policy applies to recruitment and selection for all continuing, fixed-term, casual and internal secondment vacancies within the University.

Section 4 - Policy

(5) CDU seeks to ensure that its recruitment, selection and appointment processes:

a. enhance the University's reputation, attract quality candidates who share the University's values, and are conducted in a way that showcase CDU as an employer of choice;
b. support the increased appointment, engagement, development and retention of First Nations people at the University in accordance with the University's First Nations Workforce Policy;
c. are guided by the principles of equal employment opportunity and fairness to ensure that the most capable candidates are selected based on merit. CDU always takes direct action to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination, directly or indirectly, on the basis of protected personal attributes such as:
    i. sex;
    ii. gender;
    iii. sexual orientation;

iv. marital status;
v. pregnancy or potential pregnancy;
vi. cultural background;
vii. religious or political beliefs;
viii. carer status;
ix. age;
x. disability; or
xi. any attributes that are protected under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1992 Part 3 Division 1 19 (1).

d. demonstrate fairness, equity, inclusivity and transparency at all stages;
e. achieve a balance between developing, retaining and recognising current employees and attracting external talent to bring new capabilities to the University's workforce;
f. adhere to University governing documents, relevant legislation and other statutory obligations; and
g. adhere to set timeframes and ensure a positive applicant experience at all stages.

Academic qualifications

(6) When recruiting to academic positions, applicants must be appropriately qualified in line with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, or the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025 and the RTO Credential Policy 2025.

Higher Education Academics

(7) Employees with responsibility for academic oversight, teaching and/or supervisory roles in Higher Education units and courses must have:

a. knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline/field, which is informed by continuing scholarship, research or advances in practice;
b. skills in contemporary teaching, learning and assessment principles relevant to the discipline, their role, modes of delivery and the needs of particular student cohorts;
c. a qualification in a relevant discipline of at least one level higher than is awarded for the course of study they are delivering, excluding employees supervising doctoral degrees having a doctoral degree or equivalent experience; and/or
d. equivalent relevant academic or professional/practice-based experience and expertise.

(8) Academics who deliver specialised components of a course or study who may not yet meet the standard for knowledge, skills and qualification, may have their learning delivery supervised and guided by employees who meet the standard.

(9) The qualifications, professional experience and scholarship requirements for Higher Education academics are managed in accordance with the HE Teaching - Professional Experience Equivalence Policy and Procedure and the HE Teaching - Staff Qualifications and Scholarship Procedure.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Trainers and Assessors

(10) Persons who deliver training and assessment in VET units and courses must be credentialled with current skills and knowledge in training and assessment and have current industry skills and knowledge relevant to the training product as per the RTO Credential Policy 2025 and the RTO Outcome Standards 2025:

a. training and assessment is only delivered by persons who hold the appropriate credentials for the delivery of training and assessment as specified in the RTO Credential Policy 2025;

b. where the RTO Credential Policy 2025 permits a person to deliver any training or assessment under direction – CDU ensures the person does not make assessment judgements and is delivering quality training and assessment;
c. all trainers and assessors undertake continuing professional development to maintain current skills and knowledge in training and assessment, including skills and knowledge relating to engaging and supporting VET students;
d. all persons delivering training or assessment for, or on behalf of CDU:
    i. have industry competencies, skills and knowledge that are relevant to, and at least to the level of the training product being delivered or assessed by the person; and
    ii. maintain an understanding of current industry practices relevant to the training or assessment being delivered by the person.
e. industry experts may also assist in training delivery and/or the assessment judgment, working alongside the trainer and/or assessor to conduct the training and/or assessment.

(11) For further information on trainer and assessor competencies, including those required by industry experts, refer to the RTO Outcome Standards 2025.

(12) Refer to the RTO Credential Policy 2025 for further information on:

a. assessment-only credentials;
b. actively working towards a training and assessment credential;
c. training and assessment under direction;
d. providing direction on the delivery of training and assessment;
e. delivery of Training and Education (TAE) training and assessment;
f. delivery of TAE training and assessment under direction; and
g. providing direction on the delivery of TAE training and assessment.

(13) Refer to the VET Trainer and Assessor Qualifications, Competency and Industry Currency Procedure for explicit procedural detail on the above requirements.

Identified First Nations Positions

(14) The University may identify positions that require a First Nations person to fulfil the duties of the position.

(15) Applicants for identified First Nations positions must provide acceptable evidence in accordance with the Confirmation of Aboriginality and/or Torres Strait Islander guide.

(16) Hiring managers will assess vacancies and decide whether to identify them as First Nations positions.

(17) If a hiring manager believes the position no longer needs to be an identified First Nations position due to a change in responsibilities, they may apply to the Director People and Culture to approve removal of this identification.

First Nations Priority Recruitment

(18) The University has embedded First Nations Priority Recruitment measures to strengthen the recruitment and retention levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.

(19) Each vacancy will be assessed by the hiring manager as to when First Nations Priority Recruitment is to be applied; it is not mandatorily applied to all University vacancies.

(20) Hiring Managers and selection panels are to follow the process as outlined in the First Nations Priority

Recruitment Guide.

Selection panels

(21) In most cases, the selection panel Chair will be the hiring manager of the vacancy. In some instances, it may be appropriate for an alternative Chair to be appointed at the discretion of the relevant Senior Executive Team member.

(22) The selection panel will be objective, impartial and always ensure equity and confidentiality of the recruitment and selection process.

(23) It is the responsibility of the selection panel Chair to ensure all panel members have read, understood and comply with this policy and procedure and all associated material whilst adhering to due process.

(24) Selection panels will be composed of a minimum of two (2) and maximum five (5) members. While it is understood that at times it may be difficult to fulfil all aspects of diversity for each selection panel, consideration should be given to:

a. Members who have relevant experience or knowledge of the area of appointment.
b. A diverse representation of gender.
c. Representation of people from diverse backgrounds.
d. At least one (1) panel member must be external to the work unit; and
e. If the position is identified to be filled only by a First Nations person, it is mandatory to have an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representative on the panel.

(25) All panel members must be involved in shortlisting all candidates.

Recruitment Approval Authority

(26) All recruitment approvals, including direct appointments, fixed-term contracts, continuing positions, and casual engagements, must be made in accordance with the current Delegations Register.

(27) Hiring managers must verify the appropriate delegation level (e.g., SET member, VC, or other designated officer) prior to initiating any recruitment action.

(28) Justification for non-merit-based appointments (e.g., direct appointments) must be documented and retained in accordance with CDU's record-keeping policies.

Candidate assessment principles

(29) The selection process must be merit-based and only consider the candidate's submitted application and interview responses, including qualifications, experience, referee reports, and any other information required to assess the suitability of applicants (such as mandatory medical assessments) in line with the official People and Culture Recruitment Process (internal use only).

Candidate interviews and reference checks – internal applicants from within the same business unit

(30) An interview may be conducted depending on whether the applicant has been employed in the role for a period of time within the business unit and possesses all the qualifications and/or the necessary experience for the position. Demonstrated competency and prior performance may justify the waiving of an interview.

(31) If the hiring manager differs from the applicant’s current manager, it is recommended that the applicant’s current manager provides a reference for the applicant.

Candidate interviews and reference checks – internal applicants from the wider University

(32) Where the applicant has been employed within the University for a period of time and possesses all the qualifications and/or the necessary experience for the position, an interview may still be required to assess suitability for the role.

(33) A reference check from the applicant's current manager is mandatory, and a second reference check from another source is recommended.

External applicants

(34) Where an external applicant has participated in a merit-based recruitment process, a minimum of two reference checks must be completed. One of the references should be provided by a supervisor who has directly managed the applicant and who can provide feedback on the applicant's performance.

(35) Where required, panels should seek the input of referees for the purpose of assisting the panel to gain a well-rounded understanding of the applicant's suitability for the role.

a. Panels should structure their conversation with referees around what they need to learn about an individual applicant to best inform their selection decisions. The questions being asked of the referees do not need to be identical.
b. In instances of a referee's feedback being unfavourable and adversely affecting the potential outcome for an applicant, the principles of procedural fairness must be applied, and the applicant be allowed opportunity to respond.

(36) Interviews should be structured to enhance the panel's understanding of the applicant's scope of capabilities, experience and potential, and will not be the same for each applicant.

Direct Appointments (continuing and fixed term vacancies only)

(37) The University recognises that direct appointments may be necessary in exceptional circumstances to meet operational or strategic needs. All direct appointments must comply with the other provisions of this policy and all other relevant policies, ensuring alignment with CDU's values. All direct appointments must be supported by a business justification and documented evidence of due diligence.

(38) Direct appointments may be considered in the following circumstances:

a. Specialist skills, unique expertise, or reputational needs where a competitive process is unlikely to yield suitable candidates.
b. Unsuccessful prior recruitment processes (with documented evidence).
c. Urgent operational requirements where delay would disadvantage the University.

Approval Requirements

(39) Approval is required from the relevant Senior Executive Team member for a direct appointment of up to 12 months.

(40) Approval is required from the Vice-Chancellor for a direct appointment greater than 12 months.

Reference Checks

(41) External candidates: At least two professional reference checks is required.

(42) Internal candidates: A minimum of one reference check by the applicant's current supervisor is required.

Casual direct appointments

(43) Where direct appointments for casual employees are made there is no requirement to seek approval from the relevant SET member or the Vice-Chancellor.

(44) Completing one reference check for casual direct appointments is strongly encouraged to ensure suitability for the role.

(45) All casual appointments must comply with other provisions of the Recruitment and Selection Policy and all other relevant policies, ensuring alignment with CDU's values of fairness, transparency, and respect for diversity.

(46) Merit based recruitment for casual employees is not in the scope of this policy.

Conflicts of interest

(47) A conflict of interest (COI) occurs when the private interests of a member of the University community may influence, compromise or conflict with the conduct of that member of the University community in relation to their activities at the University. For example, this may arise when a panel member has a personal relationship with a candidate, or a private interest in the outcome of the selection panel.

(48) All panel members must discuss any actual, potential, and perceived COI's as a group prior to any shortlisting process. When a panel member has an actual, potential or perceived COI in relation to any candidate, it must be declared immediately, and managed in line with the Conflicts of Interest Policy and Conflicts of Interest Procedure, and the plan to manage the COI must align with the Conflicts of Interest Management Plan Minimum Requirements (the Management Plan)(internal use only).

Record keeping

(49) People and Culture keep records for the successful candidate once their appointment is finalised, including:

a. selection documentation;
b. summation report;
c. certified qualifications; and
d. application and referee reports.

(50) It is mandatory that certified copies of relevant qualifications of successful applicants are retained on the selection and personnel file within People and Culture. The requirement to provide the appropriate qualification(s) in line with the position profile must be included in the employment contract / letter of offer. These documents are to be obtained during the onboarding process.

(51) It is the responsibility of the hiring manager to verify the applicant's qualifications by either:

a. obtaining a certified copy of the qualification(s); or
b. personally sighting the original document, making a copy, and annotating it with a signed and dated statement confirming they have sighted the original document.

(52) The annotated copy must then be sent to People and Culture for record-keeping.

(53) These records will be maintained for a sufficient period of time to comply with relevant legislation and reporting processes, such as those required by the Australian Government for recording gender designation and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(54) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct – Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct – Students.

(55) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(56) All employees have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	1st September 2025
Review Date	1st July 2028
Approval Authority	Vice-President Governance and University Secretary
Approval Date	1st September 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Fiona Coulson Vice-Chancellor
Implementation Officer	Peta Preo Director People and Culture
Enquiries Contact	Peta Preo Director People and Culture --- People and Culture

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Procedural fairness" - Procedural fairness (also called natural justice) is a principle applied by CDU when making decisions about complaints, appeals, and conduct. Essential elements include: • Giving the respondent a reasonable opportunity to be heard. If the matter involves misconduct, the respondent should know what the allegation against them is in sufficient detail so that they can answer it; • Giving the respondent reasonable opportunity to respond before the decision is made; • Genuinely considering all the evidence without bias; and • Basing the decision on evidence that supports it.