



Guidelines for Taking Up References

- Ask the candidate to supply the names and contact details (telephone and email) for at least three individuals who have had the opportunity to observe their work performance.

Note: Applicant confidentiality must be respected. Only referees nominated by the candidate may be contacted. While comment from a recent manager is desirable, this is not a requirement. Applicants may prefer to delay advising current employers that they are considering moving until they have a firm job offer.

- The purpose of the reference check is:
 - to verify the facts provided at interview
 - to obtain further information on the candidate's suitability for the role, in terms of competency and personal fit with Unitec's culture and values
 - an opportunity to explore any issues or concerns raised during interview
- Telephone Reference Check questionnaires are available for 3 categories of staff: Admin, Lecturer and Manager. Do not restrict yourself to the questions on the template you select – add specific questions to it as required, as determined with the interview panel after the interview has taken place.
- NB For senior academic appointments, comprehensive, written references are required which address Unitec's criteria for appointment at a senior level. These **must** be obtained either by the HR Advisor or the PA to the DP Academic.
- Questions should be open (i.e. not yes/no answers).
- Where possible, seek behavioural examples.
- Aim to take up references verbally, as it is much easier to ask follow-up questions of the referee to ensure you have a full picture. You can also pick up on hesitations or nuances and ask the referee to expand/clarify. However if it is impossible to contact referees for a verbal reference then the next best thing is to obtain a reference via email.

Telephone References

1. If taking up a reference over the telephone, make initial contact with nominated referees to establish a convenient time to talk. Assure the referee that their comments will remain confidential to the selection panel (and only to the applicant with their permission). Describe the position briefly or email a copy of the Position Description so that the referee is aware of the nature of the role and the competencies required.
2. Contact the referee when you know you have enough time, and have a quiet, private room from which to make the phone call. Have the candidate's CV in front of you.
3. Select the most appropriate Telephone Reference Check questionnaire. These may either be printed out and completed by hand during the telephone call or used to type answers directly into.
4. Don't forget you can add your own specific questions to the template you select and feel free to ask follow-up questions or ask the referee to expand or clarify a comment.
5. Thank the referee afterwards.

Email References

1. Select the most appropriate Email Reference Check questionnaire.
2. Add the candidate's details at the top of the questionnaire
3. Save as a Word Document
4. If you want to add some specific questions of your own:
 - Click view, toolbars, forms
 - Click the unlock icon on the Forms toolbar (looks like a padlock)
 - Add any specific questions you wish to
 - Click the padlock icon to lock
 - Save
5. Send the document as an attachment to the referees, with a covering email (see suggested wording below) and the Position Description
6. It is always helpful to give a date by which you require the reference
7. On receipt of the reference, email the referee and thank them.

Wording for Covering Email

Dear [insert name of referee]

[insert full name of candidate] has applied for a position as [insert position title] in the [insert department/School] at Unitec New Zealand and has given your name as a referee.

I would be most grateful if you could complete the attached reference check questionnaire and return it to me by [insert date].

Alternatively, if you would prefer to telephone me on the number below please feel free to do so.

I also enclose a Position Description.

Kind regards