



North Melbourne Language & Learning

Compassion  
Integrity  
Respect  
Perseverance  
Diversity  
Celebration



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Volunteer Handbook

## North Melbourne Language & Learning

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NMLL is supported by and works in partnership with a range of organisations including:



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ABN: 91 844 560 623 | TOID: 6410

## Welcome

Thank you for giving your time and helping us to make a difference to the North Melbourne community and the lives of our students and participants. North Melbourne Language and Learning (NMLL) could not achieve what it does without the invaluable contribution of volunteers.

This handbook aims to give volunteers a broad overview of NMLL and to cover some frequently asked questions.

More detailed information is contained in the NMLL Planning, Policy and Procedure Documents. Please ask the Community Development Worker or Centre Manager if you would like to see any of these documents.

We look forward to working with you and hope that your time at NMLL will be enjoyable and rewarding.

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**Our mission**

North Melbourne Language and Learning will provide and facilitate community connectedness through adult learning opportunities, focusing on English language and life skills.

**Our vision**

Our vision is to provide an accessible, inclusive and relevant service that anticipates and responds to the needs of the community we serve and:

- empowers individuals to make successful life choices
- strengthens individuals, families and the community
- connects with other agencies and local, state and federal government services
- builds understanding and a more resilient community by creating intercultural experiences.

**Our aims**

NMLL aims to:

- support and celebrate diversity by promoting active community participation and inclusion
- strengthen the community by promoting and teaching English to the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) residents of North Melbourne
- ensure access to programs for people from all backgrounds represented in the community we serve
- support the development of capacity within various CALD communities by promoting and facilitating independence, confidence and resilience
- enhance community participation through the introduction of life-long learning opportunities for people
- provide participants with opportunities for access to further education
- link participants with pathways to training and employment opportunities.

**Our history**

North Melbourne Language and Learning (NMLL) was formed in 1989 at the instigation of a group of concerned local residents and representatives from various local agencies. With funding from Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) the founders' aim was to assist Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) residents of North Melbourne by providing English classes. By providing relevant and easy to understand information about services, they were also able to help these residents connect with local agencies.

More than twenty years later, NMLL still operates as a not-for-profit, community-based organisation. NMLL has enrolments of over 150 students from fifteen different countries. We offer classes from beginner through to advanced levels of English. NMLL is a registered Neighbourhood House and is continuously expanding its Community Development Program to empower the CALD communities of North Melbourne to be more confident and able.

**Funding bodies**

NMLL is funded by:

- Department of Planning & Community Development
- City of Melbourne
- AMES
- ACFE
- Skills Victoria
- Donations

**Partnership program**

Our partnership program, established in 1999, has greatly expanded our ability to cater for the complex needs of our diverse clientele. This is partly due to the funding partners provide, but is also due to the networking opportunities and resources they offer. Our partners include:

- Adult Migrant Education Service, Flagstaff
- Hotham Mission and St Alban's church
- Kensington Neighborhood House
- Farnham Street Neighborhood Learning Centre
- Wingate Avenue Community Centre
- The Centre, North Melbourne

## Management and organisation

NMLL is administered by a volunteer **Management Committee**, responsible for setting the policies that guide the work of the organisation. Members of the committee are local residents and community sector workers.

**Funding bodies** are those groups and organisations that NMLL has funding agreements and/or partnerships with. These may change from year to year.

Our **members** are the students enrolled in classes and those participating in other programs. **Student Representative Committee (SRC)** members are nominated and elected by their peers, and liaise with NMLL staff and the Committee of Management on projects and issues of concern.

The **Centre Manager** oversees our programs, engages appropriately qualified staff, seeks funding and ensures the policies and standards are followed.

The **Community Development (CD) Worker** plans initiatives that will improve the lives of our members and also coordinates the work of our volunteers.

The **Community Liaison Worker** organises life-enriching activities for our students and participants, including speakers, information sessions and excursions.

The **Further Education (FE) Coordinator** is responsible for coordinating NMLL's education programs.

The role of the **Information Technology Coordinator** is to ensure our computer systems support the smooth operation of the organisation.

Our **teaching staff** deliver accredited and pre-accredited courses.

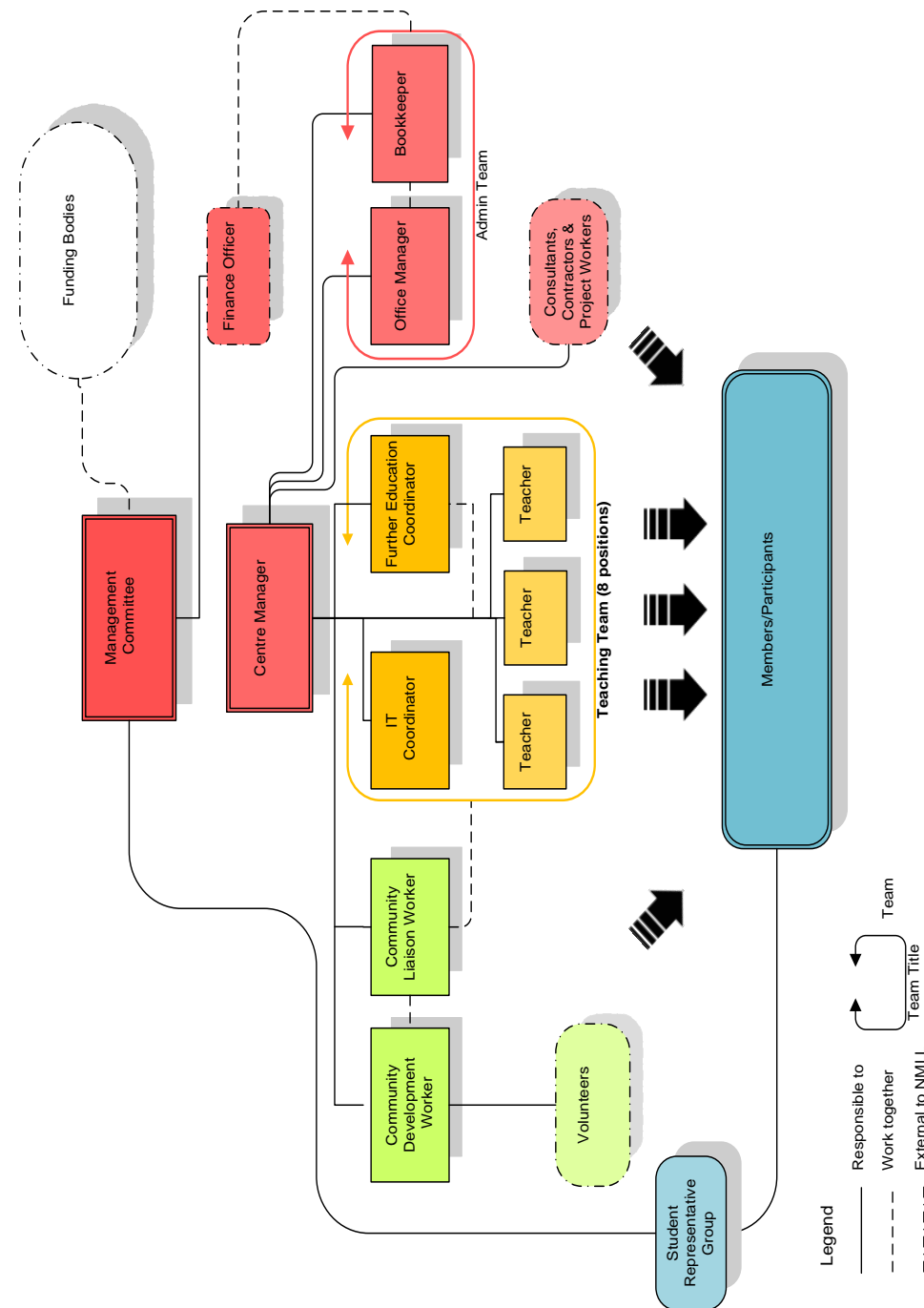
The **Finance Officer** is responsible for maintaining and reporting on NMLL's financial situation. This role reports to the Centre Manager and the Management Committee.

The **Office Manager** ensures the smooth operation of the organisation by planning and controlling administration, communication and data management.

The **Bookkeeper** processes and records accounts and prepares reports for the Finance Officer.

**Volunteers** are engaged in a range of roles in line with NMLL procedures and policies.

**Consultants, contractors and project workers** are engaged for set periods to work on defined projects or activities.



**Teaching approach**

At NMLL, we focus on developing language skills so that students can achieve accredited certificates at a range of levels.

Our courses are structured around:

- Victorian ESL Framework Certificates
- Certificates in Spoken and Written English (CSWE)
- The 'a-frame: a Framework for Quality Pre-accredited Teaching and Learning ' publication

**Courses offered**

NMLL has a partnership with AMES to deliver 510 hours of English for eligible migrants .

NMLL delivers:

**Accredited courses:**

- Course in ESL
- Certificate I in ESL (Access)
- Certificate II in ESL (Access)
- Certificate III in ESL (Access)
- Certificate III in ESL (Employment)  
(Selected modules only)

**Pre-Accredited courses:**

These courses vary each semester but may include:

- Employment focused courses
- Computer courses
- Beginner's ESL

Please refer to the NMLL website for up-to-date information.

**The principles of volunteering**

NMLL endorses these principles developed by Volunteering Australia:

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer.
- Volunteer work is unpaid.
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice.
- Volunteering is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government allowances.
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community.
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs.
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the not-for-profit sector only.
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work.
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers.
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others.
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

Volunteering Australia Inc., Lvl 3, 11 Queens Rd, Melbourne 3004  
Volunteering Victoria Inc., The Old Mint, 280 Williams St, Melbourne 3000

**Why volunteer?**

Most volunteers are motivated by a desire to contribute to the community. NMLL volunteers often tell us they want to help refugees to make a new life here, or assist people with little English to connect with their community. Our volunteers do all of that — their contribution is enormous — but it is not all one way. We constantly hear about how much the volunteer has gained from the experience. How much they have learnt about different cultures, about the challenges others have faced, and about themselves. Volunteering can be an intensely rewarding experience, for both the beneficiaries and the volunteer.

**Becoming an NMLL volunteer****Step 1**

Have a talk with our Community Development Worker about:

- the skills and experience you have to offer
- the types of assistance we need and that interest you
- the amount of time you have, and the days that suit you
- any other questions you might have — you need to be sure that we are the right organisation for you.

**Step 2**

If we have a suitable role, that makes the most of your skills and fits in with your available times, we will ask you to complete a Volunteer Application Form. This includes:

- emergency contact details and any important medical information we should have
- Information about your skills, interests and availability
- three referees and their contact details

**Step 3**

Before getting started, we will ask you to attend an induction session. This is so we can make sure you know your way around and are familiar with our staff and procedures. You will be given a task/position description at this time.

After that, you can get started—and don't worry, there's always someone about to answer any questions.

**Support and supervision**

The primary point of contact for all volunteers at NMLL is our Community Development Worker. His/her role includes:

- ensuring the aims of the volunteer program are met
- supporting the volunteers and ensuring they understand the tasks they are given and that they have access to appropriate information, feedback and resources
- referring and introducing volunteers to other NMLL staff and agencies as required
- ensuring volunteers have opportunities to interact socially within the organisation

**Rights and responsibilities**

As a volunteer at NMLL, you are covered by the policies and procedures put in place by our Management Committee.

**NMLL volunteers have the right:**

- to work in a safe and healthy environment
- to be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- to be adequately covered by insurance
- to be given accurate and truthful information about NMLL
- to be given a copy of the organisation's Volunteer Policy
- not to fill a position previously filled by a paid worker
- not to do the work of paid staff during industrial disputes
- to have a job description and agreed working hours
- to have access to a grievance procedure
- to be given an orientation to the organisation
- to have their confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Information Privacy Act (Vic) 2004
- to be given sufficient training to do their job
- to experience satisfaction from the volunteer experience
- to be recognised and respected as a valued member of the NMLL team

**NMLL volunteers have a responsibility:**

- to uphold the vision and values of NMLL
- to respect the beliefs, religion and culture of all NMLL students/ participants and NMLL staff
- to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all NMLL students/ participants, their families and NMLL staff
- to perform the duties described in their task/position description, including attending any training, workshops etc. as required
- not to give personal advice, especially on matters of health, finances, relationships and/or legal situations
- to take reasonable care of resources.

**Rights and responsibilities, continued**

NMLL volunteers need to advise the Community Development Worker or the Centre Manager promptly:

- of any issues or concerns related to their volunteer activity
- of any changes to their address or other contact details
- if they are unable to attend
- if they are unable to continue volunteering.

**Unable to attend**

We rely on our volunteers but understand that sometimes illness or other issues may prevent them from attending. Volunteers are asked to give as much notice as possible of any absence by contacting NMLL reception. With sufficient notice, we may be able to find someone to fill in.

**Reimbursement of expenses**

NMLL will reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses related to their work at NMLL provided the expense has been authorised in advance by either the Community Development Worker or the Centre Manager.

Receipts must be produced for all reimbursements.

To ensure the most current versions are accessed, procedure documents are all stored on Google Docs and/or on the NMLL share-drive. If you would like to see a hard copy, please ask the Community Development Worker or the Centre Manager:

Document	Owner*
<b>Planning Documents</b>	
• AQTF Roles & Responsibilities	FE Coordinator
• Risk Management Plan	Centre Manager
• Disability Plan	Centre Manager
• Strategic Business Plan	Centre Manager
• Staff Professional Development Plan	Centre Manager
<b>Organisation Handbooks</b>	
• Student Handbook	FE Coordinator
• Staff Handbook	Community Development Worker
• Management Committee Handbook	Centre Manager
• Volunteer Handbook	Community Development Worker

**Strategic Planning**

The Strategic Business Plans sets the goals, objectives and timelines for the future of the organisation. The strategic business planning cycle is generally over a three year period and includes continuous consultation with the community, staff and Management Committee. Periodic reviews take place throughout the three-year period.

\* The document owner is accountable for document maintenance.

## Policies and Procedures

### Policy documents

Our policies, which are approved by the Committee of Management, guide the way we operate at NMLL. All NMLL policies are also available in hard copy. Current policy documents are:

- Code of Conduct
- Continuous Improvement
- Diversity
- Fees and Refunds
- Finance
- Grievance (Students and Staff)
- Health and Safety
- Information Technology
- Operation & Management
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Professional Development
- Recruitment and Employment (Human Resources)
- Student Selection
- Training, Assessment, Evaluation, Moderation and Validation
- Volunteering

## Policies and Procedures

### Code of conduct

At NMLL we seek to create an environment of cooperation and mutual respect.

All persons attending NMLL have a right to:

- be treated fairly
- be treated with respect and patience
- feel safe in the learning environment
- be free from harassment, discrimination and physical or verbal abuse
- have a comfortable and welcoming environment
- have their needs listened to.

All persons at NMLL are expected to:

- treat each other fairly and equally
- respect other people's differences in culture, religious beliefs, politics and sexual preferences
- express ideas and opinions in ways that do not offend others
- be polite and courteous at all times
- conduct themselves in an appropriate manner
- observe the safety requirements of NMLL at all times
- adhere to NMLL policies
- treat the premises, equipment and furniture with care.

Harassment of any form is not acceptable at NMLL. Harassment based on gender, race ethnicity, religion, size, age, disability or sexual preference, including sexist or racist language, or physical, emotional or verbal abuse is a criminal offence.

Any person who feels they have been or are being treated unfairly should speak with the Centre Manager. Where appropriate, they should complete an Incident Report. The Centre Manager will follow the grievance procedure process. Any person continuing to behave inappropriately may be asked by the Manager to leave.

Please also refer to:

- NMLL Grievance Policy and Procedure
- NMLL Privacy and Confidentiality Policy



## Policies and Procedures

### Privacy

NMLL is very serious about the protection of privacy. In compliance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth); Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Commonwealth) and Information Privacy Act 2000 (Victoria), a Privacy Policy has been developed and approved by the Committee of Management and may be viewed in hard copy or electronically via the shared document storage.

The policy includes the following key points:

- NMLL is committed to handling personal information responsibly and with respect for the principle that people have control over the way information about them is handled.
- All people are entitled to have personal information treated with confidentiality. NMLL will endeavour to protect confidentiality, and will create an environment of respect and privacy for program participants and service users.
- No information about staff, Committee of Management members, volunteers or program participants may be given out without the person's written consent.
- Confidentiality applies to verbal information, photographs, written information and information stored on computers and discs etc..
- If any information including photographs is to be used, consent will be sought in writing.
- Committee of Management, staff and volunteers will respect the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of their work with NMLL.
- Staff are entitled to share information with their supervisor (internal or external) for the purposes of supervision and debriefing. The supervisor will treat information disclosed confidentially.
- Information about staff, volunteers, program participants and other NMLL users shall remain confidential except where it involves:
  - serious illegal actions on the part of a person involved with the organisation
  - any issue which could endanger the safety of other people
  - any issue which could endanger a person and/or dependent children
  - where a staff member is obliged to make a notification to the Department of Human Services.

## Policies and Procedures

### Privacy, continued

If this is the case, the person concerned must be informed directly that any information they give (i.e. on violent crimes, child abuse) may be reported to the relevant authority in accordance with Victorian or Federal laws.

### Appropriate use of I.T.

North Melbourne Language & Learning requires all who use its IT facilities to do so in a responsible and ethical manner. The policy applies to staff, volunteers, students and visitors.

#### Users must:

- take all reasonable care in using NMLL computer facilities and report any breakdowns or problems to the Centre Manager without delay
- abide by software licensing agreements and copyright laws
- respect the physical and intellectual property of others
- use the computer access in an ethical and legal manner
- take responsibility for their own health by using good ergonomic practices, ensuring adequate light and taking regular breaks to avoid potential health hazards.
- obtain approval from a staff member prior to inserting any disc or loading any files or programs.

#### Users must not:

- store private or personal information that they do not wish others to access
- use the internet to access pornographic, defamatory or derogatory material or any confidential information about a member of the community
- use email for messages which are defamatory, derogatory, harassing, pornographic or contain confidential information about a member of the community.

## Policies and Procedures

To ensure the most current versions are accessed, all procedural documents are stored on Google Docs and/or on the NMLL share-drive. Hard copies are also available.

### Procedural Document

- Advertising and Marketing Procedures
- Assessment and Evaluation Procedures
- Code of Practice
- Diversity Procedures
- Fees and Refunds Procedures
- Financial Procedures
- Fraud Prevention Procedures
- Grievance Procedures
- Initial Student Placement Procedures
- Information Technology Procedures
- Non-attendance (student) Procedures
- Organisation Structure (chart and terminology)
- Records and Archiving Procedures
- Recruitment Procedures
- Risk Management Plan
- Staff Absence Procedures
- Professional Review Procedures
- Version Control Procedures

## Policies and Procedures

### Recycling and Sustainability

NMLL is an environmentally conscious organisation. Please make every effort to reduce waste and maximise recycling by:

- only printing if absolutely necessary
- reusing paper whenever possible (instead of throwing it out)
- putting paper in recycling boxes instead of the rubbish bin