



**MENTAL HEALTH
FIRST AID®**

For Anyone. For Everyone.®

Standard Mental Health First Aid for Health Professional Students

A GUIDE TO BECOMING A LICENSED MHFA INSTRUCTOR

**Australian Council of Deans of Health Sciences
Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery Australia and New Zealand
Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand**

OVERVIEW

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Licensed Mental Health First Aid® (MHFA®) Instructor to deliver the Standard Mental Health First Aid for Health Professional Students course at your university.

This Guide has been developed to provide you with information on how to become a Licensed Mental Health First Aid Instructor, including the role of an Instructor, eligibility, the application process and License Maintenance Requirements.

ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Mental Health First Aid Australia offers a range of early-intervention education courses that equip people with the skills to recognise, respond and offer initial support to someone experiencing a mental health problem or mental health crisis until professional help is received or the crisis resolves. MHFA training also helps improve outcomes and help seeking behaviours for those affected by mental health problems.

Visit the Mental Health First Aid Australia website to learn more: mhfa.com.au

ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID INSTRUCTORS

Mental Health First Aid Australia runs intensive Instructor Training Courses to equip adults with the relevant skills and experience to become a Licensed MHFA Instructor. These Instructors form the backbone of Mental Health First Aid Australia's national course dissemination. Passionate about improving the mental health of their communities, Licensed MHFA Instructors:

Make a difference

By improving outcomes for people experiencing mental health problems.

Enhance their knowledge

Strengthen their knowledge, communication skills and crisis intervention techniques.

Increase community care

By equipping people with the skills needed to intervene early and offer support when it matters most.

Join a global movement

Contribute to improving mental health, reducing stigma, and creating a more passionate and informed society.

Licensed MHFA Instructors play an important role in improving capacity for community-led care through the delivery of Mental Health First Aid training in workplaces, schools, tertiary institutions, and communities nationwide.

By becoming a Licensed MHFA Instructor in your university, you will be empowered to educate students about mental health, reduce stigma, and increase support for those experiencing mental health problems.

Licensed Instructors are responsible for maintaining their Instructor License and adhering to certain obligations as set out by Mental Health First Aid Australia.

THE STANDARD MHFA FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS INSTRUCTOR TRAINING COURSE

The Standard MHFA for Health Professional Students Instructor Training Course equips adults with the knowledge and skills to deliver both the Standard MHFA for Health Professional Students and Standard MHFA courses.

What you will learn

The Instructor Training Course (ITC) teaches participants how to operate as a Licensed MHFA Instructor and how to deliver Mental Health First Aid courses following the specific course content and structure.

Participants learn course material, mental health statistics and the evidence that underpins the delivery of both the Standard MHFA for Health Professional Students and the Standard Mental Health First Aid courses.

Adding to their existing facilitation skillset, participants also learn instructional techniques, including the use of teaching materials, facilitating discussions, managing group activities and application of the MHFA practical action plan.

They are also introduced to the administrative systems that will support their course management and Instructor journey.

For more information:

About Mental Health First Aid Licensed Instructors video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzcrkxNoLo4>

Standard MHFA for Health Professional Students ITC Flyer: <https://bit.ly/MDANZITCFlyer>

Duration and format

The 5-day intensive training course is delivered online by an MHFA Master Trainer, to groups of 6-8 participants.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must meet the following selection criteria:

- Be a current Accredited Standard MHFAider, Youth MHFAider or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFAider*
- Have a good knowledge of mental health problems, their treatments and support services
- Personal or professional experience supporting people with mental illnesses
- Excellent group facilitation, communication and interpersonal skills
- Individual acknowledgement of license maintenance requirements (see Appendix A) or organisational support to deliver MHFA courses
- Hold a valid Working with Children Check from their state/territory of residence.

Licensed Instructors are not required to be mental health professionals, nor to have qualifications in mental health.

Please note that applications are not currently open to existing Licensed Standard MHFA Instructors. The opportunity to upskill to become a Licensed Standard MHFA for Health Professionals Instructors will be available in 2025 and 2026.

***Becoming an Accredited MHFAider:**

Mental Health First Aiders, or MHFAiders, are people who have completed a Mental Health First Aid course. They are equipped with the practical skills and confidence to recognise, understand and respond to someone experiencing a mental health problem or mental health crisis, until professional help is received, or the crisis resolves.

To become an **Accredited** MHFAider you are required to complete a Standard MHFA, Youth MHFA or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MHFA course, and successfully pass the Accreditation Assessment.

For more information on completing a Mental Health First Aid course: mhfa.com.au

INSTRUCTOR LICENSE MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

To become a Licensed MHFA Instructor, Instructors are required to sign an annual Instructor Licensing Agreement. To maintain their license they must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Deliver a minimum of two MHFA courses (either Standard MHFA for Health Professional Students or Standard MHFA) on an annual basis (License Period).
- (b) Accept the terms of the Instructor License Agreement and pay the Annual License Fee before the due date; (as at January 2024 this is \$150).
- (c) Minimum and maximum numbers are to be followed in all instances, except where prior approval is sought and obtained from MHFAI (and MHFAI will be reasonably flexible where circumstances warrant). For MHFA courses the maximum number of participants is 12 participants for courses delivered online and 24 for courses delivered face-to-face. For all MHFA courses the minimum is 6 participants.
- (d) Hold a current "Working with Children Check" or equivalent as agreed and approved by MHFAI in writing).

Greater detail is provided in the appendix, and we recommend that you discuss these requirements with your University/employer to ensure a mutual understanding of your obligations and how you will be supported to maintain them.

Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to the "lapsing" of an Instructor's license by MHFAI.

APPLICATION PROCESS

2024 Instructor Training Course dates

The following Instructor Training Course dates are scheduled for 2024:

- 6th May - 10th May 2024
- 13th May - 17th May 2024
- 8th July - 12th July 2024
- 22nd July - 26th July 2024

Under the 2024-2026 funded project, prospective Licensed Instructors are required to submit an Expression of Interest to be considered by their university and the project stakeholders.

Expressions of Interest can be submitted online here: <http://bit.ly/InstructorTrainingEOI>

Applications

Applications are completed online and applications must be submitted at least **6 weeks prior** to the commencement of the training. The application process requires the applicant to demonstrate how they will meet the selection criteria, including specific examples where required.

Please note that applications are not currently open to existing Licensed Standard MHFA Instructors. The opportunity to upskill to become a Licensed Standard MHFA for Health Professionals Instructors will be available in 2025 and 2026.

NOTE: online application links will be available in March.

Applicants will be reviewed against Mental Health First Aid Australia's stated eligibility criteria. It can take up to 10 business days for your application to be reviewed and the Applications Team may request additional information or examples from you. You will be emailed directly if this is the case.

Once provisionally approved, applicants will need to submit evidence of their valid Working with Children Check to be accepted into the Instructor Training Course.

Note: we reserve the right to reject any individual application at our sole discretion.

Completing your application

Applicants must respond to a series of question as outlined below.

The detail required is designed to demonstrate that the applicant has necessary skills and experience needed to educate adults about mental health. Specific examples are requested, similarly to what would be expected from a job interview.

Sample application questions

The following provide an example for the sort of questions to expect in the application. The actual application may also include specific questions relating specifically to your tertiary and health professional experience.

In a few words, tell us about your current role, vocation, or profession. You can also list any other experiences (such as volunteer work) or skills that might be relevant to your application.
Please describe the support your organisation will provide to ensure you can maintain your MHFA license.
Provide examples of your facilitation experience or training that you have done with groups. <i>Please don't tell us about one-on-one or clinical experiences. Include examples that highlight the size of the group, nature of the training, duration, your management of safe spaces, sensitive content, group dynamics and communication strategies. Your answer needs to demonstrate that you have strong facilitation, communication, and interpersonal skills.</i>
Thinking about your connections and networks across your broader community, provide specific examples that demonstrate your knowledge of mental health referral pathways and community services.
Part of the aim of the MHFA course is to reduce the stigma towards people with mental health problems. Identify the factors that you believe contribute to stigma and how these impact our communities and workplaces.
Describe the key skills that you think are needed to be an effective MHFA Instructor.
Mental Health First Aid Australia has an excellent reputation for our research and evidence-based programs. Summarise why these two things are both important to maintain high quality course delivery.
If a participant in one of your sessions became distressed, describe how would you manage the situation. Your response should outline what actions you would take for the individual and for the group.
List and describe your 3 main reasons for wanting to become a Licensed MHFA Instructor.

Letter of Support

Applicants are required to submit a Letter of Support from their university as part of their application.

The Letter of Support will confirm that your university supports you to undertake Mental Health First Aid Instructor Training and commits to supporting you to meet your Licensed Maintenance Requirements. It will also confirm that your university acknowledges ongoing costs associated with the delivery of MHFA courses and that decisions around this will be discussed directly with you as the Instructor.

Finally, the Letter of Support confirms that the university understands that should you cease employment with the university, your Mental Health First Aid Australia license and Instructor training kit will be retained by you as the individual Instructor.

A Letter of Support template will be provided to your university to complete, which you will need to be attached to your application.

Working with Children Check

Licensed MHFA Instructors are required to hold a valid Working With Children (WWCC) or their state's equivalent as part of their agreement to deliver Mental Health First Aid training. This

requirement is to support the creation of safe learning environments for course participants, and to ensure Instructors' conduct is aligned with the values of MHFA Australia.

Both volunteer and employment checks are accepted.

To apply for a WWCC, please find the relevant website below.

VIC: <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/>

NSW: <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/working-children-check/apply-wwcc/how-apply-wwcc>

QLD: <https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au>

TAS: <https://wwcforms.justice.tas.gov.au/RegistrationForm.aspx>

WA: <https://workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au>








NT: <https://forms.pfes.nt.gov.au/safent>

SA: <https://screening.sa.gov.au/applications>

For questions about the Working with Children Check, please contact: courses@mhfa.com.au

Application Checklist

Please refer to the following application checklist prior to submitting your Instructor Training Course application.

-  You have reviewed the information provided in this document and you understand the role of a Licensed MHFA Instructor and the application process.
-  You have connected with Mental Health First Aid Australia to discuss any questions about becoming a Licensed Mental Health First Aid Instructor.
-  You have connected with your University/employer to discuss your role as an Instructor within your university and have a mutual understanding of this role and its obligations.
-  You have your Letter of Support from your University/employer to include in your application.
-  You are an Accredited MHFAider and have your Certificate of Accreditation. Please note: you will need to apply for the Instructor Training Course using the same email address that you completed your MHFAider course with.
-  You hold a valid Working with Children Check.
-  You have reviewed the application questions.

What happens once your application is accepted?

Upon approval of your application, you will receive a course offer email from the MHFA Courses Team. The offer needs to be accepted within 7 days, you will also be required to read and accept the License Instructor Agreement.

WHAT HAPPENS UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF YOUR INSTRUCTOR TRAINING COURSE?

Once you have successfully completed the Instructor Training Course and become a Licensed MHFA Instructor, you will receive access to a range of resources to support you in your role as an Instructor, including:

- **The Instructor Portal:** a dedicated system designed for Licensed Instructors to create and manage their courses and participants, and access to the Learning Library.
- **The Learning Library:** a suite of resources including FAQs and a guide to navigating the key features of the Instructor Portal.
- **MHFA Instructor Updates:** regular emails providing Instructors with updates and information that support and celebrate Instructors.
- **The Australian Program Delivery Specialist Team:** The Specialists are all Licensed MHFA Instructors and are your contact point for a range of enquiries relating to the delivery of your Mental Health First Aid courses.

CONTACT

If you have any questions about becoming a Licensed MHFA Instructor, please contact the MHFA Course Team:

courses@mhfa.com.au
03 9070 0200

To discuss your interest in becoming a Licensed MHFA Instructor within your University, and the details of this role, please contact your University.

APPENDIX

Information for Licensed Instructors - Maintaining your MHFA Instructor License

License Requirements

A Licensed Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Instructor can deliver a range of MHFA courses, where each course type will have its own license. To become a Licensed MHFA Instructor and maintain your status as a Licensed MHFA Instructor you must:

- a) successfully complete the applicable MHFAI Instructor Training course(s) and maintain your license for such course(s) in accordance with the Terms in the Instructor License Agreement and by fulfilling any requirements reasonably requested by MHFAI from time to time;
- b) Deliver a minimum of two MHFA courses (either Standard MHFA for Health Professional Students or Standard MHFA) on an annual basis (License Period).
- c) operate as a Licensed MHFA Instructor in Australia only (unless provided with a written exemption by MHFAI to deliver courses in another country to a specified organisation/group and/or for a specified time period);
- d) only deliver courses that you are licensed to deliver and do so via the prescribed requirements, as set out in Schedule 3 of the Instructor License Agreement;
- e) pay an Annual License Instructor Fee by the due date for the upcoming year in advance;
- f) maintain a current “Working with Children Check” (or equivalent as agreed and approved by MHFAI in writing);
- g) provide MHFAI with any information reasonably requested and required by MHFAI to determine whether you are complying with these Terms;
- h) not share, on-sell or provide any of the MHFAI Materials to any third party without our prior written approval (excluding participants who attend one of your courses);
- i) ensure that all participants in your courses are provided with the relevant information and/or MHFAI system link to complete the course assessment for them to gain their MHFA accreditation;
- j) ensure that all participants in your courses are provided with the relevant information and/or MHFAI system link to provide course feedback about the course content and their learning experience;

License Period

The Instructor License Period spans from 1 January to 31 December each year. The Annual License Instructor Fee is payable from November each year and covers the following years Instructor License Period.

For example, the payment made in November 2023 covers the 2024 Instructor License Period (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2024).

New Licensed Instructors

We recommend that you deliver at least one course soon after becoming a Licensed MHFA Instructor. This promotes confidence, and familiarity with the content. Instructors must deliver a minimum of two courses – per License type – each full calendar year.