



**MENTAL HEALTH
FIRST AID®**

For Anyone. For Everyone.®

Standard Mental Health First Aid for Health Professional Students

A GUIDE FOR UNIVERSITIES TO SUPPORT THEIR LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID INSTRUCTORS

**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

Mental Health First Aid Australia is pleased to be supporting universities to train staff to become Licensed MHFA Instructors to deliver the Standard MHFA for Health Professional Students course.

Universities play a crucial role in supporting their Licensed Mental Health First Aid^(R) (MHFA^(R)) Instructors to deliver MHFA training within their university and to fulfil their obligations as a Licensed Instructor. This ranges from nominating suitable staff to participate in the training through to supporting them throughout the application and training process.

This guide has been developed to provide universities with an overview of the MHFA Instructor Training process and guidance in the planning and delivery of MHFA training within the university.

It is to be used by university staff who are responsible for overseeing all aspects of MHFA course delivery within the School.

PART 1: SUPPORTING UNIVERSITY STAFF TO BECOME A LICENSED MHFA INSTRUCTOR

The information in this section provides details about the eligibility criteria and ongoing responsibilities of Licenced MHFA Instructors, as well as a detailed overview of the Instructor Training application process.

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. Mental Health First Aid (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.

Licensed MHFA Instructors in your university 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 INSTRUCTOR TRAINING COURSE PARTICIPANTS 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 applicants 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 Instructor Training applicants to ensure a mutual understanding of your obligations and how the university will support them to maintain these.

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 applicants 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 the 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 their 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 the university supports the applicant to undertake Mental Health First Aid Instructor Training and commits to supporting them to meet their annual Licensed Maintenance Requirements. It will also confirm that the university acknowledges ongoing costs associated with the delivery of MHFA courses and that decisions around this will be discussed directly with the Instructor.

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

A Letter of Support template will be provided to the university to complete, which applicants will need to be attached to their 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.

Individuals can apply for a WWCC via 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

University support checklist

Please refer to the following checklist to ensure you can adequately support the Instructor Training Course applicant.



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 discussed with the Instructor Training applicant the university's expectations of the timing and frequency of course delivery and advised of what administrative support relating to the scheduling, may be made available to them.



You have identified who at your university will sign the Letter of Support for the Instructor Candidate to include in their application.

What happens when an application is accepted?

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

PART 2: SUPPORTING YOUR UNIVERSITY'S LICENSED MHFA INSTRUCTORS AND THEIR COURSE DELIVERY

This section provides your university with the information needed to support staff in their role as a Licensed Instructor at your university. It includes information ranging from supporting the Instructor to meet their Instructor License obligations, through to resourcing considerations.

HELP CENTRE

The Mental Health First Aid Australia Help Centre addresses a range of Frequently Asked Questions. It is a valuable resource for universities and prospective Licensed Instructors to learn more about Instructors, course delivery and more.

mhfa.zendesk.com/hc/en-us

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES

Mental Health First Aid Australia has an extensive range of resources to support Licensed Instructors in the planning and delivery of courses. These resources are only available to Licensed Instructors however it is important that your university is aware of these resources and encourages Licensed Instructors to use them as needed.

- **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 the contact point for Instructors for a range of enquiries relating to the delivery of Mental Health First Aid courses.

SCHEDULING AND COORDINATING MHFA COURSES

Universities need to support their Licensed Instructors with the scheduling, promotion and coordination of MHFA courses. This is necessary for the successful delivery of training to students and to ensure that Instructors meet their License Maintenance Requirements. The following information provides details to enable your university to determine the level of support required and how it will be provided.

Administrative support

We recommend your university consider appointing staff to assume administrative responsibilities on behalf of Licensed Instructors, in agreement with your Licensed Instructors and subject to the Instructor's own capacity. The administrative support may include:

- Course planning and scheduling
- Course promotion
- Managing eLearning/voucher allocation
- Managing participants
- Finance processes.

Mental Health First Aid Australia’s *Instructor Administrator functionality* provides system access to undertake a number of course coordination activities on behalf of nominated Instructors. This system access may be suitable for your university. Further information will be available in the coming months.

Course delivery modes

Standard MHFA for Health Professional Students	
Component 1:	Self-paced eLearning (5-7 hours)
Component 2	Instructor-led component delivered as either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-hour face-to-face session (6-24 participants) • 2 x 2.5-hour video conferencing session (6-12 participants)

These maximum and minimum participant numbers have been set to:

- Improve the quality of the training by allowing optimal interaction within the group and to support activities that are designed for pairs and triads;
- Enable better management of the psychological and physical safety of individuals and the group; and
- Optimise the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Co-delivery of MHFA courses

Licensed Instructors can co-deliver a course (that they are licensed to deliver) with another Licensed MHFA Instructor. The Supporting Licensed MHFA Instructor must also be licensed to deliver that course and not have a lapsed account. Both Licensed MHFA Instructors must remain present throughout the entirety of the training.

Note, having two Instructors co-deliver does not mean the class size can be doubled.

Finance support

The cost of eLearning vouchers are covered under the 2024-2026 funding.

However, materials not covered by the funding (e.g. additional eLearning vouchers or vouchers purchased once the funding has finished) are to be purchased by Licensed Instructors* via the MHFA Australia Shop: shop.mhfa.com.au

Payment methods available are:

- Invoice
- Credit card
- PayPal

Payment terms are 14 days.

Licensed Instructors within a university often select the invoice option so that the university can make payment on their behalf via invoice. In these circumstances the billing contact email on the order must still be the Instructor to ensure they receive the materials (i.e. vouchers).

Adequate lead times for purchases is required to ensure that the course materials (e.g. eLearning vouchers) are received in time for scheduled courses. Mental Health First Aid Australia does not release materials until payment is received in full. Universities should factor any internal finance processes to allow for this.

*Instructor Administrators can also purchase materials via the Shop where applicable.

Key contacts

Instructor Training Courses courses@mhfa.com.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instructor Training Course Inquiries
MHFA Customer Experience 03 9079 0200 mhfa@mhfa.com.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participant support• e-learning support• Technical Support
Australia Program Delivery Specialists Standard@mhfa.com.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-application questions• Application support• Course delivery questions• Maintenance requirements• Ongoing Instructor support• Instructor Portal support
Universities Engagement Team universities@mhfa.com.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional support for the implementation of MHFA training at the university

APPENDIX

Information for Licensed Instructors - Maintaining your MHFA Instructor License

License Requirements

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

- a) 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) 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);
- c) 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;
- d) pay an Annual License Instructor Fee by the due date for the upcoming year in advance;
- e) maintain a current “Working with Children Check” (or equivalent as agreed and approved by MHFAI in writing);
- f) provide MHFAI with any information reasonably requested and required by MHFAI to determine whether you are complying with these Terms;
- g) 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);
- h) ensure that all participants in your courses are provided with the relevant information and/or MHFAI system link in order to complete the course assessment in order for them to gain their MHFA accreditation;
- i) ensure that all participants in your courses are provided with the relevant information and/or MHFAI system link in order 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 Instructor License Period.

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

Please read over the updates that announce the extension of current License Maintenance requirements until 31/12/2024:

New Licensed Instructors

Within the first calendar year of becoming a Licensed MHFA Instructor, it is recommended that you deliver at least one course soon after becoming a Licensed MHFA Instructor. This promotes confidence, currency and familiarity with the content. You are not required to meet the full license maintenance requirements during this period up to 31 December. You must maintain a current and valid WWCC (or equivalent).

Licensed Lapsed

With the earlier mentioned Licence Maintenance extension, your MHFA Licensed can currently lapsed due to:

- Expired Working with Children's Check - new details to be updated in your Instructor Portal.
- Unpaid Annual License Fee - this lapsing will occur if the due date for payment isn't met.