

Child Safety Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) This Policy sets out the University's approach and commitment to creating a child safe organisation which is in alignment with the Child Safe Standards.

(2) The University is committed to the protection and wellbeing of children in accordance with the Child Safe Standards. This Policy and Procedure applies to all staff, students, researchers, contractors and volunteers, and relates specifically to their contact with children. The standard defines a child as a person under 18 years of age.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to all members of the University community including:

- a. Staff;
- b. Students;
- c. Contractors;
- d. Visitors to the University (including volunteers).

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) The University is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people (under the age of 18 years) and has a zero tolerance towards child abuse.

(5) The University also promotes diversity and tolerance in cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and ensures that children with a disability are given the opportunity to participate equally.

Section 4 - Procedure

Part A - Duty of Care

(6) Staff have an obligation to take reasonable steps to protect children in their care from the risks of injury that are reasonably foreseeable. Exercising a duty of care means:

- a. acting on concerns quickly and in the child's best interests;
- b. protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of the children in your care.

(7) You may breach your duty of care towards a child if you fail to act in the way a reasonable, diligent person would in the same situation

Part B - Maintaining a Child-Safe Environment

(8) Policy Principles:

- a. The University values children and seeks to protect them;
- b. The University is committed to providing child-safe environments both on-campus and during University-related activities off-campus;
- c. The University's recruitment processes aim to support child-safe environments;
- d. The University expects all staff, students, titleholders, contractors and volunteers to meet the standards of behaviour in its [Code of Conduct](#) and in the Child Safety Code of Conduct;
- e. The University encourages and supports the prompt reporting of allegations of child abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- f. The University aims to manage all allegations of child abuse, neglect and exploitation sensitively and expeditiously, and in accordance with principles of natural justice and procedural fairness;
- g. The University is committed to supporting mandated notifiers under the Act to meet their legal obligation to notify of any reasonable suspicion of child abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- h. The University aims to meet all research ethics and compliance requirements, including the Child Safe Standards;
- i. The University supports all persons in prescribed positions by providing access to training and resources to foster an understanding of obligations for child safety and protection;
- j. The University is committed to maintaining confidentiality when dealing with and reporting on all allegations of child abuse, neglect and exploitation, except as required by law.

Part C - Child Protection Officer

(9) The University will appoint a Child Safety Officer who will be the Risk & Regulatory Compliance Advisor.

Part D - Recruitment, Training and Induction

Recruitment of Personnel to Work Closely with Children

(10) Responsibility: Heads of School/Clinics/Child Care Centre.

(11) Follow the [Recruitment Policy and Procedures](#) for prospective staff, students, contractors, and volunteers that includes undertaking Working with Children Checks for roles that work with children under 18.

Part E - Staff Working With Children

Personnel Currently Working Closely with Children

(12) Responsibility: Heads of School, Clinic Managers

- a. will ensure that current personnel in prescribed positions are aware of their relevant obligations under the standards and this Policy;
- b. will assess whether current staff, students, contractors, and volunteers are working in prescribed positions, and if they are, will request that the person so identified undergo the same checks and training as specified in the [Recruitment Policy and Procedures](#) prospective employees on ratification of this Policy and biannually;
- c. will maintain a record of clearances and training requirements for persons in prescribed positions.

Part F - Students and Researchers Working With Children

Students Working With Children

(13) Students undertaking clinical placements, teacher education placements or any other University activity that involves regular contact with children must complete screening checks (including obtaining the Working with Children Card) and Child Safe training (see part K), and sign and comply with any code of conduct relevant to their placement or activity as required by the placement provider, before working with children.

(14) Background screening checks must be undertaken on commencement of employment and annually thereafter.

Research Activities Involving Children

(15) Researchers will advise their Head of School when their research involves working with children and must ensure:

- a. that research involving children is conducted in compliance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2018\)](#) and [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#), in particular the chapter Children and Young People;
- b. will obtain clearances for working with children as may be required by this Policy and/or the University's [Recruitment Policy and Procedures](#).

Part G - Off-Campus Activities

(16) Off-campus activities involving children (e.g. field trips/camps).

(17) Responsibility: Staff, students, contractors, volunteers organising off-campus activities involving children.

(18) Children involved in off-campus activities, including accommodation arrangements such as homestay must be safe from harm. Anyone in contact with children in off-campus University activities must ensure they obtain clearances for working with children as may be required by this Policy and/or the University's [Recruitment Policy and Procedures](#).

Part H - Risk Management

(19) The University Risk Management Office Unit will liaise with relevant organisational units to ensure risk management strategies are in place to identify, assess and minimise child abuse risk, including risks posed by physical and online environments.

Part I - Privacy

(20) All personal information considered or recorded will be protected and will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety

(21) All communications will be treated confidentially in support of the individuals involved.

Part J - Reporting Concerns or Abuse

(22) All staff, students, contractors and volunteers have a responsibility to report:

- a. any breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct;
- b. any concerns about child safety to the University's Child Safety Officer.

(23) If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse or danger the Police should be called without delay on 000.

Part K - Child Safe Training

(24) Staff, students, contractors, and volunteers will complete an induction and/or training on child safety and protection, as required.

(25) Heads of School, Clinic Managers, Child Care Centre Manager, Third Party provider of activities involving children will ensure that every person in a prescribed position completes the required mandatory training and continues to hold the relevant WWC clearances required to engage in those activities.

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Part L - Disciplinary Action

(26) Where it is found that a child's safety is jeopardised, the University may bring disciplinary action against a staff member or student, in accordance with the [University Enterprise Agreement](#) (for staff), the [Student Misconduct Statute](#) (for students).

Section 5 - Definitions

(27) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. Child safe environment: means a respectful and protective environment where children can participate safe from harm in the University's learning, teaching and research activities.
- b. Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.
- c. Abuse or neglect, in relation to a child, means:
 - i. sexual abuse of the child; or
 - ii. physical or emotional abuse of the child, or neglect of the child, to the extent that;
 - iii. the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological injury detrimental to the child's wellbeing; or
 - iv. the child's physical or psychological development is in jeopardy.
- d. For the purposes of this Policy, the University has adopted the definition of child exploitation in the Child Safe Standards. Child exploitation and abuse means - one or more of the following:
 - i. committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child;
 - ii. possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material;
 - iii. committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming.

Section 6 - Stakeholders

Responsibility for implementation – Colleges, Clinics, Children Centre, Sports Centre.

Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – Risk Management Office Unit – Risk and Regulatory Compliance Advisor.

Status and Details

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