

Children on Campus Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) La Trobe is committed to providing an accessible, supportive and flexible environment for staff and students, including those with responsibilities as carers. La Trobe recognises that parents/carers may occasionally bring their children into the work and teaching environment on campus.

(2) Staff and students may bring a child/young person onto a campus where difficulties arise with normal arrangements or for the purposes of breast/bottle feeding provided that they comply with the [Breastfeeding Policy](#).

(3) Refer to the policy on information relating to health, safety and welfare considerations, access to specific areas and supervision.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) Applies to:

- a. All campuses;
- b. students;
- c. staff and associates of the University (contractors, agency staff, conjoints, volunteers, honoraries, Council members, visiting appointments and other professional personnel), herein referred to in a collective group as 'staff' in this policy unless specifically identified as being separate.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) Staff and students may bring a child/young person onto a campus where difficulties arise with normal arrangements or for the purposes of breast/bottle feeding provided that they comply with the [Breastfeeding Policy](#).

(6) La Trobe does not expect that children will be routinely brought onto campus however understands the need may arise in one-off circumstances e.g., school holidays or usual care arrangements cancelled at the last minute.

(7) La Trobe expects that children brought onto campus will not:

- a. unreasonably interfere with operational requirements;
- b. cause a risk to people's health and safety;
- c. cause a risk of damage to University resources.

(8) La Trobe is committed to ensuring that there is no direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of sex, parenthood or status as a carer and that the competing demands of various roles such as parent, carer, student and staff member can be balanced in such a way that all staff and students have the opportunity to meet their needs.

Health, Safety and Welfare

(9) The ultimate responsibility for the safety of any person on a campus resides with La Trobe. La Trobe therefore reserves the right to decide whether a child should be permitted, or should be allowed to remain, in any particular location.

(10) Where the presence of a child is deemed to be creating a hazard or creating an unreasonable interference with workplace or student operations La Trobe is obliged to take action. This may include requesting the parent/carer to remove the child(ren) from campus or the location assessed to be a risk.

(11) A child who is unable to attend school or normal childcare facilities due to illness should also not be brought to campus to ensure the safety of other staff/students/visitors. In cases where a child is ill, staff are able to access appropriate leave provisions for the purpose of caring for the child. Students should contact the appropriate teaching staff member to organise alternative study arrangements (e.g. study notes or extensions to assignments).

Access to Specific Areas

(12) Certain areas of a campus may have supplementary policies or guidelines relating to children that must be consistent with overall La Trobe policy. Unless expressly authorised by the relevant Senior Executive Group member, children are not permitted in the following areas:

- a. laboratories, workshops, plant rooms and clinical areas;
- b. agricultural, horticultural or other science based areas that store associated chemicals, liquids or equipment;
- c. construction sites, areas where minor works or maintenance are being conducted or where machinery may be in use;
- d. food preparation areas, kitchens, or areas where cleaning or associated chemicals may be found;
- e. areas containing Sport Science (Physiology) fitness and exercise equipment, floor based heaters and wet floors (other than for designated programs for children); and
- f. any other hazardous areas.

Supervision

(13) La Trobe requires that (except in the case of children attending campus child care or La Trobe child sports activities):

- a. children brought onto a campus or associated site are fully supervised at all times by a parent or carer;
- b. the parent/carer must not ask or expect other staff or students to take care of their child(ren);
- c. responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of the child(ren) resides with the parent/carer;
- d. show respect and consideration towards other colleagues for noise levels; and
- e. ensure children do not attend meetings or staff discussions regarding confidential/sensitive issues.

Section 4 - Procedures

Children in Classes

(14) La Trobe recognises the need for students to bring their children to classes occasionally, for example due to unexpected child care difficulties.

(15) Students should seek permission from the teaching staff member concerned. Approval/denial is at the sole discretion of the teaching staff member however, such requests should not be unreasonably declined and students

must:

- a. ensure that the class is not disrupted;
- b. ensure there is no risk to the safety of those present;
- c. respect and consider other students in relation to the child's behaviour and noise levels during classes.

(16) Permission for children to accompany students to classes may be withdrawn at any stage.

(17) Children who have, or are suspected to have a contagious or infectious disease must not be brought into classes or study areas.

Children in the Workplace

(18) La Trobe recognises the need for staff to bring their children to work occasionally, for example due to unexpected child care difficulties. Staff should seek permission from their manager and approval/denial is at the sole discretion of the manager.

(19) However, due consideration must be given to the work environment and the needs of fellow staff members.

(20) Children who have, or are suspected to have a contagious or infectious disease must not be brought into the workplace.

General Information

Specific Areas

(21) Unless expressly authorised by the relevant Senior Executive Group member, children are not permitted in the areas defined in the Policy.

Supervision

(22) Supervision of children on campus must comply with the Policy.

Campus Accessibility

(23) La Trobe is committed to accessible campus layout, including provision for pram entrances into buildings and ramps.

(24) Parents and carers must be aware, however, that there are some areas which are intrinsically hazardous and inaccessible and it is their responsibility to ensure awareness of these areas.

Breastfeeding

(25) Refer to the [Breastfeeding Policy](#) for further information.

Other Options for Staff

(26) When an emergency child care situation occurs the following options should also be considered:

- a. utilising carers leave when caring of ill children or recreation leave;
- b. taking time off on the understanding the time will be made up later;
- c. utilising time off in lieu.

Other Options for Students

(27) When an emergency child care situation occurs the following options should also be considered:

- a. discussing options with the lecturer;
- b. discussing options with the subject coordinator;
- c. application for special consideration.

Requests

Making a Request

(28) Staff and students wishing to bring a child onto a campus or associated site should make a request to their manager or teaching staff. Requests should be reasonable in the circumstances and give due consideration to La Trobe's operational requirements and to health and safety. Requests should be made as soon as possible, preferably at least 24 hours in advance, to allow due consideration and time for any changes to be implemented.

Responding to a Request

(29) Where a request to bring a child on campus is received from a staff member or student, the manager/teaching staff will consider it on its merits and not unreasonably refuse the request.

Requests must comply with conditions outlined in the Children on Campus Policy and considerations will include:

- a. the nature of the request, including the nature of the workplace or the study forum attended by the parent/carer;
- b. the needs of the parent/carer and the provision of adequate supervision;
- c. whether the presence of the child on campus will present any health or safety risk to the child(ren) or any other person.

Refusing a Request

(30) A request to bring a child(ren) on campus, or for work/study arrangements to allow a staff member/student to do so, may be refused if it imposes an unreasonable hardship or an unreasonable health and safety risk. Where a request is refused the staff member/student must be provided with a written response outlining in detail the reasons for the refusal and any suggested alternatives. The response must be signed and dated by the manager/teaching staff member.

Responsibilities

(31) Managers and teaching staff are required to consider each request for children on campus individually, taking into account alternative flexible options, considerations of any disruption to the class that may be detrimental to other students or colleagues in the workplace.

Section 5 - Definitions

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

- a. Child is deemed to be a young person under the age of 12 years and incorporates 'young persons' who are 12 years of age or over but not yet an adult in accordance with the Children and Young People Act 2008.

Status and Details

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