

Child Safety and Wellbeing

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to outline Griffith University's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children, and to ensure the University fulfils its responsibilities and obligations under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

2.0 Scope

This Policy applies to:

- all employees, Council members, students, volunteers and contractors who interact with children or have exposure to children in the course of their research, work activities or study whilst at or engaged by Griffith.
- all activities undertaken as part of study, research, work, living and socialising which is organised or reasonably associated with the University, whether that activity occurs on a Griffith campus, at a different site, or online.

3.0 Policy Statement

3.1 Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

Griffith is committed to providing an inclusive and safe environment for the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. This includes:

- Adopting a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination against or abuse of any child,
- Providing an accessible and child-centred process for reporting allegations of child abuse or mistreatment,
- Where programs are designed for children or include an underage cohort, communicating with families or carers and encouraging their involvement,
- A commitment to the cultural safety of children with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage and from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds,
- A commitment to the social and psychological safety of children of all sexualities and gender identities, including intersex,
- A commitment to enabling the full participation of children with disabilities,

- Maintaining robust human resources and recruitment practices, which explicitly consider child safety and wellbeing and embed screening requirements as appropriate.

Griffith ensures that children have an opportunity to express their views and concerns and be heard. Children should be provided with appropriate information as to their rights and the standards of care to which they are entitled and provided guidance and support with regard to raising concerns, making complaints, or letting someone know if they feel unsafe.

Griffith recognises and endorses the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and will ensure these principles are implemented through the Child Risk Management Procedure.

3.2 Interacting with Children Code of Conduct

All staff are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct. Accredited professionals such as health practitioners are additionally governed by their professional body's code of conducts and ethical standards.

All students are required to adhere to the Student Charter Framework. Depending on the course of study, some students may also be required to hold provisional accreditation and are additionally governed by their professional body's code of conducts and ethical standards.

The Interacting with Children Code of Conduct (which starts at 3.2.1) applies in addition to those obligations.

3.2.1 Expected behaviour – All University Community

All members of the University community must act in a manner to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of children in any interactions they may have with children during any activities undertaken as part of study, research, work, living and socialising which is organised or reasonably associated with the University, whether that Activity occurs on a Griffith campus, at a different site, or online.

Griffith expects that all members of the University community avoid inappropriate actions, behaviours, or language, when interacting with children.

3.2.2 Expected behaviour – All Staff

Prioritising the physical safety of children

All staff must:

- provide appropriate supervision for children based on their age and level of maturity
- ensure contact, including online, with children is consistent with University policies, programs, and activities
- specifically consider risks to the safety and wellbeing of children in planning activities, and include mitigation strategies (which may be separate to but in addition to broader WHS risk strategies)
- be open and transparent and keep other adults informed of the activities to be undertaken with children
- use computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras, and social media appropriately.

Staff must not:

- engage in unacceptable or unlawful behaviour towards or with a child
- use inappropriate language towards or in front of children
- inappropriately hire children who are members of the University community for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage

- post online any information about a child that may reveal their identity without the child's informed consent and, in the case of a child under 16, their parent or guardian's consent.

Prioritising the wellbeing and psychological and cultural safety of children

All staff must:

- consider cultural needs in the planning and delivery of support and services
- treat children with respect
- respect a child's privacy in sensitive matters, such as health or family problems, and only reveal confidential matters when lawful and appropriate.

Staff must not:

- discriminate against or denigrate any child because of their age, gender, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, or disability
- question a child's self-identification or self-expression related to their gender, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, or disability
- express inappropriate or disrespectful personal views on cultures, ethnicity, sexuality, or disability in the presence of children
- shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade students, including children.

3.3 Annual Risk Management Strategy

The Child Risk Management Procedure is Griffith's risk management strategy which is reviewed annually to ensure that control measures are adequate and operating effectively, and to ensure compliance with the Act.

3.4 Contraventions

Any contraventions of the Interacting with Children Code of Conduct and the Child Risk Management Procedure will be treated in accordance with the Griffith University Code of Conduct.

3.5 National Redress Scheme

Griffith University is a participant in the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse and encourages anyone who has experienced historical sexual abuse as a child to visit the National Redress Scheme [website](#) and consider applying.

4.0 Roles, responsibilities and delegations

The roles and responsibilities set below must be read in conjunction with the University's [Delegations Register](#).

Role	Responsibility
Vice Chancellor	Approval of this Policy
Provost	Approval of the Child Risk Management Procedure Responsible for all communications and matters relating to the National Redress Scheme
Deputy Registrar	Child Protection Officer

School Manager or Placement Officer	Child Protection Support Coordinator
All Staff	Comply with this Policy and the Child Risk Management Procedure

5.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Act refers to the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*

Child in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ‘child’ means every human being under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. For the purposes of this Policy, a child is a person under the age of 18 and ‘**Children**’ has the corresponding meaning.

Volunteer is a member of the community who provides their services in a voluntary capacity to the University, not for financial reward but who may receive reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses.

6.0 Information

Title	Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Document number	2023/0001001
Purpose	The purpose of this Policy is to outline Griffith University’s commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and to ensure the University fulfils its responsibilities and obligations under various legislative frameworks
Audience	Staff, Students, Public
Category	Governance
Subcategory	Risk
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	This document aligns with Sustainable Development Goal: 3: Good Health and Well-Being
Approval date	12 April 2023
Effective date	12 April 2023
Review date	2025

Policy advisor Provost

Approving authority Vice Chancellor

7.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation [Child Protection Act 1999](#)
[Criminal Code \(Child Sexual Offences Reform\)](#)
[Education and Care Services Act 2013](#)
[Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#)
[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)
[National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018](#)
[Standard 5 - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)
[Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000](#)

Policy [Code of Conduct](#)
[Risk and Resilience Management Policy](#)
[Student Charter Framework](#)

Procedure [Child Risk Management Procedure](#)

Local Protocol [Griffith Child Care Protocols Documents](#)
[Young Conservatorium Protocols](#)
[GUEST Program Protocol](#)

Forms N/A
