

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.

For advice and support contact policy@griffith.edu.au for Governance and Operational policy documents.

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	Operational
Subcategory	Risk
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	This document aligns with Sustainable Development Goal/s: 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
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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
