

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

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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 young people and to ensure the University fulfils its responsibilities and obligations under the [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000](#) and the [Commonwealth's Child Safe Framework](#).

2.0 Scope This Policy applies to adults and young people involved in any University activity, and includes the children of staff and students visiting any campus or engaged in any Griffith activity.

This Policy applies to all activities undertaken as part of study, research, work, living and socialising which is organised, or auspiced by, or reasonably associated with the University, whether that Activity occurs on a Griffith campus, at a different site, or online.

This Policy applies to all staff, students, volunteers and contractors who undertake Child-related work, or have exposure to Children in the course of their research, work activities or study whilst at or engaged by Griffith.

3.0 Policy statement

Griffith is an inclusive and safe environment in which all staff, students, volunteers and contractors contribute to the development, learning and wellbeing of Children and young people. The University expects that all members of the University community will:

- Take a proactive approach to the prevention of harm to Children by identifying possible exposures and risks early and removing and/or reducing any risks to Children or young people,
- Take prompt and appropriate action in response to any allegation or suspicion of child harm,
- Provide appropriate guidelines, processes, and support services for the reporting and handling of disclosures and suspicions or harm,
- Promote best practices in relation to child safety, and
- Promote a culture of child safety and respect.

3.1 Wellbeing, welfare and participation of children and young people

Griffith is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children and young people. This includes:

- a commitment to the cultural safety of young people with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds,
- a commitment to the social and psychological safety of young people of all sexualities and gender identities, including intersex young people,
- a commitment to enabling the full participation of young people with disabilities,

Griffith ensures that children and young people have an opportunity to express their views and concerns, and be heard.

Children and young people are 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.

3.2 Child Protection

All members of the University community, whether in designated child-related roles or not:

- must act to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of Children in any interactions they may have as part of their role at the University,
- must comply with the Under 18 International Student Policy and Procedures when dealing with international students under the age of 18,
- have a responsibility to report a disclosure or suspicion of sexual offending against Children to Griffith's Child Protection Officer, who will notify Police in accordance with the *Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020*,
- have a responsibility to respond to a disclosure or suspicion of harm to a Child in accordance with the processes contained in the Child and Young People Risk Management Procedure, in conjunction with any other mandatory reporting obligations where applicable,
- have a responsibility to report non-compliance of this policy and the Child and Young People Risk Management Procedure to Griffith's Child Protection Officer,
- will comply with any Child safety training, registration or accreditation requirements relevant to their University duties or activities,
- must undertake any Griffith activity in a manner that reflects and complies with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations in Appendix A, and
- must undertake the necessary risk assessments when planning interactions with Children or young people in accordance with the Griffith Enterprise Risk Management Framework.

Griffith's Child Protection Officer is the principal point of contact for Child protection matters and is responsible for facilitating processes for responding to and reporting suspicions of harm to a Child or young person.

3.3 Working with Children Checks

As an education and research institution, the University is subject to the provisions of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)* (the Act) and other similar legislation in other States. However, only staff, students, volunteers and contractors undertaking activities that are considered to be regulated employment under this Act, or other similar legislation in the State where the activity is to take place, are required to undergo a Working with Children Check or equivalent.

The Working with Children Check is a screening process that assesses a person's suitability to work with Children based on known disciplinary and police information. People who work in education and care services, or who provide other services in an environment where education and care is being provided, must hold a valid Working with Children Check or an exemption card to comply with the Act and the *Education and Care Services Act 2013* or other similar legislation in other States where the activity is to be conducted.

3.3.1 Students

All students undertaking professional placement or work integrated learning activities within Queensland, or any other State, are required by law to hold a valid Working with Children Check, or equivalent in the State where the activity is to be undertaken, if engaging with children or young people.

Arrangements for professional placement or work integrated learning activities for students aged under 18 must ensure that the professional placement or work integrated learning partner has appropriate policies and procedures relating to child safety.

3.3.2 Staff

Griffith teaching staff are exempt from requiring a Working with Children Check even if some of their students are under the age of 18. Notwithstanding, staff providing services or undertaking activities that are considered to be regulated employment under the Act or who meet the requirements of the *Education and Care Services Act 2013* where education and care services are provided for at least:

- Eight consecutive days, or
- Once a week, each week, over four weeks; or
- Once a fortnight, each fortnight, over eight weeks; or
- Once a month, each month, over six months;

or is required under the legislation of the State where the activity is to be undertaken,

are required by law to hold a valid Working with Children Check.

Where the University requires a Staff member to hold a valid Working with Children Check as a regulated employment requirement, the requirement will be contained as an inherent requirement in the position description and will be the responsibility of the staff member to obtain and maintain, with reimbursement of direct costs associated with obtaining a valid Working with Children Check by Griffith. Prospective employees are not to commence work at the University until a valid Working with Children Check has been issued.

3.3.3 Volunteers and Contractors

Volunteers or Contractors may be required to hold a valid Working with Children Check when working for, or at, the University, depending on their direct engagement and exposure to Children, or where they meet the requirements of the *Education and Care Services Act 2013* where education and care services are provided for at least:

- Eight consecutive days; or
- Once a week, each week, over four weeks; or
- Once a fortnight, each fortnight, over eight weeks; or
- Once a month, each month, over six months.

or is required under the legislation of the State where the activity is to be undertaken.

3.3.4 Disqualification Orders

Staff, students, volunteers or contractors who hold a valid Working with Children Check and are issued with a Disqualification Order issued by a court, or who are being investigated for, have been charged with or convicted of a Disqualifying Offence or Serious Offence, or who receive a negative notice or a change in police information, are required to notify their Supervisor immediately so necessary steps can be taken to ensure the person is prohibited from engaging in Child related regulated employment or activities.

3.4 Blue Card Portal

Elements must work closely with HR&S to manage Working with Children Check processes for their services or activity (i.e., identification of roles), as appropriate. Additionally, all Queensland Blue Card records for Griffith Blue Card holders are to be recorded in the Element's [Blue Card Services Organisation Portal](#) and updated to ensure accurate records are maintained.

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
Dean (L&T) or Director	Child Protection Officer within the Organising Element
Placement Officers	Child Protection Support Coordinator

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*

Blue Card means the card issued by the Queensland Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) once it has carried out a blue card check to see if a person is eligible to work in the areas of Child-related work covered by the Act. If a person is eligible, they are issued a positive notice letter and a blue card.

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.

Disqualification Order means an order under s 357 of the Act or an offender prohibition disqualification order made under the *Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004*, s 13T.

Disqualifying Offense is an offence categorised as a 'disqualifying offence' under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* if it is an offence of counselling, procuring, committing or attempting to commit as listed on the PSBA website and updated from time-to-time (<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/laws-regulated-industries-and-accountability/queensland-laws-and-regulations/regulated-industries-and-licensing/blue-card/eligible/disqualifying-offences>)

Queensland Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) is the agency established to provide support services and perform other functions in relation to Queensland government public safety entities.

Regulated Employment refers to categories of employment regulated by the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* or other similar legislation in other States. This does not include all work where there is contact with Children.

Serious Offence means an offence as defined by s 15 of the Act.

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.

Working with Children Check is a National check undertaken by the relevant agency within the State responsible for determining if a person is eligible to work in the areas of Child-related work covered by the Act or other similar legislation in the State where the activity is taking place.

APPENDIX A - National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Principle 1	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisation leadership, governance and culture
Principle 2	Children and young people are informed about their rights, participation in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Principle 3	Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
Principle 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
Principle 5	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
Principle 6	Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused
Principle 7	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
Principle 8	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
Principle 9	Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved
Principle 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people
Additional Obligation	Organisations should consider, where appropriate, to impose child safety requirements in relation to the conduct of procurement, grants and other funding arrangements

Further detailed information on the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations can be found on the Australian Human Rights Commission [website](#).

INFORMATION

[Printable version \(PDF\)](#) [Downloadable version \(Word\)](#)

Title	Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Document number	2021/XXXXXX
Purpose	The purpose of this Policy is to outline Griffith University's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and to ensure the University fulfils is responsibilities and obligations under various legislative frameworks
Audience	Staff; Students; Public
Category	Governance
Subcategory	Risk Management
Effective date	<Insert date>
Review date	2023
Policy advisor	To be determined
Approving authority	University Council

RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Legislation	<p><u>Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004.</u></p> <p><u>Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020</u></p> <p><u>Education and Care Services Act 2013</u></p> <p><u>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</u></p> <p><u>Standard 5 - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018</u></p> <p><u>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</u></p>
Policy	<p><u>Children in the Workplace Policy</u></p> <p><u>Enterprise Risk Management Framework</u></p> <p><u>Under 18 International Student Policy and Procedures</u></p>
Procedures	<p>Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure</p>
Local protocols	<p><u>Commonwealth Child Safety Framework</u></p> <p><u>Commonwealth Child Safe Framework – Implementation Self-Assessment Tool</u></p> <p>Griffith Child Care Protocols Documents</p> <p>Young Conservatorium Protocols</p> <p>GUEST Program Protocol</p>
Forms	N/A