

Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure

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1.0 Purpose

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure strengthens Griffith's employment and operational practices to promote the protection and wellbeing of children and young people who are involved in services or activities provided by Griffith.

The Procedure outlines how Griffith aims to prevent and respond to any harm to children in association with our services or activities by requiring members of the University community to:

- a. identify circumstances that pose a risk of harm to children or young people, where Griffith personnel interact with children and young people;
- b. implement strategies and controls to minimise the risks to children and young people, including identifying recruitment needs and training requirements;
- c. be aware of child harm reporting requirements and support services available; and
- d. be aware of required working with children (blue card) checks and develop appropriate internal processes to ensure compliance.

2.0 Scope

This Procedure applies to Griffith staff, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors who:

- participate in regulated child related work, as defined under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (the Act), during the course of their engagement with the University;
- engage with or undertake activities through Griffith with children and young people, or
- partake in professional placements or integrated learning activities with children and young people.

It also applies to Griffith personnel involved in the administration or management of persons in regulated child-related work (for example, students on placement or Student Ambassadors who visit schools), to the extent of implementing relevant administrative processes.

3.0 Legislative Context

Under the Act, Griffith is classified as a regulated business and an employer of persons in child related regulated work. Therefore, Griffith is required to develop and implement an annual child and youth risk management and strategy. This Procedure fulfills the requirements of relevant legislation including:

- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011 (Qld)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Education and Care Services Act 2013
- Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020
- Commonwealth Child Safety Framework

4.0 Procedure

As a higher education provider, Griffith primarily provides services to persons over 18 years of age. However, there are a range of circumstances where members of the University community interact with children and young people in regulated child related work.

4.1 Categories of regulated employment

Griffith carries on activities which intersect with the regulated employment obligations within the Act. Such activities include:

- an educator, carer or staff member in an education and care service. For Griffith this may mean a staff member who provides child care services in one of the Griffith childcare centres.
- health, counselling and support services provided to a person under the age of 18. For Griffith this includes support services such as course counselling, career counselling, international student support provided by staff, and course related health, counselling or support services provided by Griffith students undertaking work integrated learning (WIL) or placement activities;
- services or activities conducted on campus, at a school, or in a community location directed mainly towards children or mainly involving children. For Griffith this potentially includes widening participation, school student recruitment and research activities;
- sport or active recreation activities directed mainly towards or mainly involving children. For Griffith this potentially includes on campus school tours, events and research activities;
- students undertaking WIL or course placements in a place that is a regulated business, for example Griffith students undertaking placement in schools, childcare or health facilities; and
- child accommodation including homestay. For Griffith this means where international students under the age of 18 are placed in a Griffith approved accommodation or homestay, the homestay provider and other people over the age of 18 residing in the home are in regulated employment.

4.2 Categories of regulated business

Griffith carries on activities within the category of regulated business within the Act, in so far as its usual activities includes or is likely to include:

- a person providing health, counselling or support services to a child, including a service provided by a health student in the student's capacity as a health student. For Griffith this may mean a Griffith staff or student in the Griffith Health Clinics who provides health, counselling or support services to children or young people.
- a person providing child care services, including a person carrying out activities in a premises where there are children to whom child care is being provided. For Griffith this may mean a staff member who provides child care services in one of the Griffith childcare centres.
- a person providing sport or active recreation activities directed mainly towards or involving children. For Griffith this may mean a Griffith staff or student within Griffith Sport and Recreation who provide sport or active recreation activities with children.

Griffith personnel providing teaching, coaching or tutoring to persons under the age of 18 are not within the scope of application of this Procedure, to the extent that they are not considered as being in regulated employment as Griffith falls within an exemption on the basis that it is a certified education provider.

Services provided by registered health practitioners at the Griffith Health Service and Griffith Health Clinics are not within the scope of this Procedure as the Act provides an exemption for registered health practitioners. However, any activities that include the provision of a health, counselling or support service by a registered health practitioner outside the person's usual functions may fall within one of the above categories and therefore within the scope of this Procedure.

4.3 Identifying circumstances where Griffith personnel interact with children or young people

The following services and activities have been identified as the primary circumstances where potential exposure or risk of harm, abuse or exploitation of children or young people exist within the organisation.

It is an expectation that heads of Element will:

- ensure the early identification and timely risk assessment of activities or services that involve interaction with children or young people,
- develop and implement risk management plans, procedures and processes, specific to the activity or service, that clearly addresses the risk of harm to children,
- identify and ensure staff, students and volunteers receive the necessary information or training required for activities or services that involve interaction with children or young people,
- identify and ensure relevant working with children checks are undertaken and blue cards are obtained for staff or volunteers in regulated employment or where activities or services that involve interaction with children and young people require working with children checks and blue cards; and
- ensure records are created and retained to document evidence of interactions with children by members of the University community.

Circumstances at Griffith University that may involve interaction with children or young people

	Activity or service (circumstance)	Responsible Area
1	Personnel undertaking regulated child-related work, or carrying out activities in a premises where there are children to whom child care is being provided.	Campus Life Organising, Element
2	Personnel undertaking regulated child-related work through visits to schools, campus tours with school groups and student recruitment events (including on-campus workshops and events for school aged young people).	Organising Element Office of Marketing & Communications
3	Personnel undertaking regulated child-related work through Widening Participation Programs and activities	Student Life Organising Element
4	Personnel undertaking regulated child-related work or interacting with children or youth through special events, recreational events, excellence programs (including Young Conservatorium programs), co-curricular clubs or sporting events (including school holiday sporting programs).	Campus Life Organising Element
5	Researchers working with children and youth through research programs or activities	Office for Research Organising Element
6	Students entering work placement in a regulated business or otherwise entering regulated child-related work as a part of their course	Student Life Organising Element
7	Griffith personnel and homestay hosts who interact with international students who are under the age of 18 participating in homestay placement and English language pathways	Campus Life Griffith International

8	Teaching and other personnel working with youth through the GUESTS-At School program which typically involves school students between the ages of 15-17 undertaking course units in an undergraduate program	Organising Element Office of Marketing & Communications
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4.4 Compliance with the Blue Card system

The blue card system, set out in the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* and administered by the [Queensland Government: Blue Card Services](#), determines a person's eligibility to work with children and young people in Queensland based on a criminal history check and ongoing monitoring of police information. Griffith is required to comply with the requirements of the blue card system to the extent it is carrying on a regulated business and where personnel are in regulated employment in Queensland.

Where the activity is taking place in another State or country, Griffith must comply with the laws and requirements in relation to working with children and young people in that other state or country. It is the responsibility of the Organising Element to identify and comply with any working with children checks and obligations in other States and countries where activities might be undertaken.

4.4.1 Identifying who requires a Working with Children Check or exemption card

At Griffith, the below persons or roles are responsible for understanding working with children check requirements and ensuring Griffith personnel entering regulated employment are identified and undergo the necessary working with children check:

Identification of Working with children checks requirements

Continuing or fixed-term contract	The Organising Element hiring or contracting with a person for a period of 12 months or more, is responsible for identifying the need for a working with children check (blue card) and request that a notice of the requirement be included in the request to recruit by HR&Safety
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Short term contract	The Organising Element hiring or contracting with a person for short term contracts (a period of less than 12 months) or volunteer arrangements, is responsible for identifying the need for a working with children check (blue card) and request that a notice of the requirement be included in the request to recruit by HR&Safety
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Student placement activities	Organising Elements are required to identify when a working with children check (blue card) is a requirement of a course, must include the requirement in the course outline and ensure students have a working with children check (blue card) for relevant placements and a copy is retained on the student's central file.
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Volunteers	The Organising Element is required to identify when a working with children check (blue card) is a requirement and must maintain appropriate records
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Researchers	The Research Supervisor is required to identify when a working with children check (blue card) is required for researchers
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Homestay hosts

Director Griffith International is required to identify when a working with children check (blue card) is a requirement and must maintain appropriate records

4.4.2 Blue card registers

It is an expectation that Organising Elements understand and adhere to the Queensland Government Blue Card system and work closely with HR&Safety to manage blue card processes for their services or activity (i.e., identification, application and renewals) in Queensland, as appropriate. Additionally, all blue card records for Griffith blue card holders must be recorded against the relevant Element's Blue Card Organisational Portal (attached to the Griffith University Organisational Portal) and regularly updated to ensure accurate records are maintained.

4.4.3 Notification of negative notice or change of police information

If an Organisational Portal owner receives notification of a negative notice or a change in police information, they are required to notify their Supervisor immediately so that necessary steps can be taken to ensure the person is prohibited from engaging in child related regulated employment. Further, they must attempt to notify the owners of other Griffith Organisational Portals of the negative notice or a change in police information to ensure all records across the University are updated appropriately.

Where Griffith has received notice of a negative notice or a change in police information, the responsible Element must also notify any external organisations, as soon as practicable, who may be affected by this negative notice or change in police information.

4.5 Processes and procedures for preventing harm

Interactions with children and young people and the types of regulated child related work is varied across Griffith, therefore the strategies implemented to mitigate the risks are primarily developed and implemented by the relevant Organising Element.

It is expected that the Griffith [Enterprise Risk Management Framework](#) is applied when undertaking activities or providing services involving children or young people.

4.5.1 Expected behaviour

Griffith expects that all members of the University community will act in a manner to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of children in any interactions they may have with children and/or young people. All interactions with children or young people must be undertaken in accordance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

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](#). 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.

4.5.2 Standards of behaviour for interacting with children and young people

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

4.5.3 Prioritising the physical safety of children and young people

All staff must:

- provide appropriate supervision for children and young people based on their age and level of maturity

- ensure contact, including online, with children and young people is consistent with University policies, programs and activities
- specifically consider risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people 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 keeping other adults informed of the activities to be undertaken with children and young people
- use computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras and social media appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children and young people or access child exploitation material through any medium

Staff must not:

- engage in any form of sexual contact with a child
- use any physical force towards a child
- engage in unauthorised personal contact with children, including sexual or other inappropriate touching or invasive acts, including through social networking sites
- engage in inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature with a child, including making sexually suggestive comments or sharing sexually suggestive material, including via online platforms
- commit or coerce another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child or young person
- possess, control, produce, distribute, obtain or transmit child exploitation material
- commit or coerce another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming
- develop inappropriate or 'special' relationships with children or young people (for example, preferential treatment, the giving of inappropriate gifts, or in-class favouritism)
- inappropriately hire children or young people 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.

4.5.4 Prioritising the wellbeing and psychological and cultural safety of children and young people

All staff must:

- promote the cultural safety, inclusion, participation and empowerment of all children including: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children; children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds; children with a disability; and children who identify as LGBTIQ,
- promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by supporting their connection to culture, kin, community, cultural practices and identity
- consider cultural needs in the planning and delivery of support and services
- treat children and young people with respect
- respect a child or young person'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 young people

- shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade students, including children and young people.

4.6 Reporting harm or suspicion of harm

All members of the University community have a responsibility to respond when it is suspected that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, or where you suspect an unborn child may be in need of protection after they are born. The responsibility applies when a reasonable suspicion, as defined by s.13C Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld), has been formed in the course of your capacity at Griffith.

If you believe a child or young person is in immediate danger or a life-threatening situation, you must contact emergency services on triple zero (000) as soon as possible.

Mandatory Reporting

It is recognised that some members of the University community have mandatory reporting requirements imposed by legislation. Individuals with mandatory reporting obligations have personal responsibility for fulfilling mandatory reporting requirements including providing a written report to QPS and/or Child Safety as stipulated by s13E of the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld). All persons with mandatory reporting requirements are expected to be aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and the legal framework for sharing information about child protection concerns.

Students on Placements

If confronted with something that should be disclosed, the onus is on the student to make a disclosure to the host organisation where they are carrying out their placement. Individual sites have policy and procedures to follow, and, in some instances, mandatory reporting requirements will apply (i.e., ss365-366 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)*). Students may also contact their course coordinator, clinical placement facilitator or liaison office for guidance.

Research

If a researcher discovers or suspects harm or a risk of harm to a child, mandatory reporting requirements may apply. Researchers must access the relevant legislation and be familiar with the specific requirements in each jurisdiction and can seek guidance from Research Ethics and Integrity.

DFAT Funded Research Partners

In accordance with the [DFAT Child Protection Policy 2017](#), recipients and awardees under the Australia Awards program and DFAT grant recipients, including under the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), Direct Aid Program (DAP) and Public Diplomacy programs are subject to additional reporting requirements. Any suspected or alleged case of child exploitation, abuse or policy non-compliance by anyone associated with DFAT-funded research in connection with official duties or business must be immediately reported to the DFAT Conduct and Ethics Unit.

In addition to any mandatory reporting, all instances of suspected, disclosed or witnessed child harm, whether on campus or off-campus, must be reported via GSafe and the Child Protection Officer as soon as possible.

4.7 Support provided by the Child Protection Officer

The Child Protection Officer will determine the next steps in the event of any suspected, disclosed or witnessed child harm reported via GSafe. This includes:

- determining whether the case meets the threshold of reporting to QPS and/or Child Safety and undertaking any necessary notification,
- consideration as to whether the matter requires referral to Family and Child Connect or other relevant support service when there are concerns for the wellbeing of a child or young person that does not

meet the threshold for a report to QPS or Child Safety and it is believed that the child would benefit from support services,

- consider whether the matter requires management under Griffith disciplinary processes (if a Griffith staff or student is involved), and
- appoint a Child Protection Support Coordinator.

The Child Protection Support Coordinator will provide support relating to child protection generally by:

- offering assistance and support when a person at Griffith receives a disclosure of harm,
- organising external support to assist parties following a disclosure or suspicion of harm,
- engaging with the Office of Marketing & Communications, if required by the Child Protection Officer, if dealing with the media is required.

4.8 Records Management

The creation of complete and reliable records is an important aspect in ensuring the identification of abuse and appropriate response in instances of actual or alleged harm.

The Queensland State Archives has released [Guidelines for creating and keeping records for the proactive protection of vulnerable persons](#) under the (*Public Records Act 2002*) which includes records relating to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. It requires that evidence of interactions with children by public authorities which may provide corroborating evidence supporting current and future allegations and disclosures or incidents of child sexual abuse are documented and retained.

For further information, please contact the Information Management Lead, Digital Solutions (records-services@griffith.edu.au).

5.0 Roles, responsibilities and delegations

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Dean (L&T) or Director	Child Protection Officer within the Organising Element
School Manager or Placement Officer	Child Protection Support Coordinator

6.0 Definitions

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 working with children 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.

Working with Children Check is a National check undertaken by the Queensland Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) in Queensland to determine if a person is eligible to work in the areas of child-related work covered by the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* in Queensland.

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.

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>)

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

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 received reimbursement for out of pocket expenses.

Young person means a person, at least 18 years but no more than 21 years, who is transitioning from being a child in care under the *Child Protection Act 1999* to independence.

INFORMATION

Printable version (PDF) Downloadable version (Word)

Title	Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure
Document number	2021/XXXXXX>
Purpose	The purpose of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure is to strengthen Griffith's employment and operational practices and procedures to promote the protection and wellbeing of children and young people who access or are involved in services or activities provided by Griffith.
Audience	Staff; Students; Public
Category	Governance
Subcategory	Risk Management
Effective date	<Insert date>
Review date	2022 (to be reviewed annually)
Policy advisor	To be determined
Approving authority	University Council

RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Legislation	Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020 Education and Care Services Act 2013 Public Records Act 2002 Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld) Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011 (Qld)
Policy	Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Code of Conduct Enterprise Risk Management Framework Records Management Policy Student Charter Under 18 International Student Policy and Procedures
Procedures	N/A
Local protocols	Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

[Commonwealth Child Safe Framework – Implementation Self-Assessment Tool](#)

[Guidelines for creating and keeping records for the proactive protection of vulnerable persons](#)

Forms

N/A