Purpose

To demonstrate the University’s commitment to providing a safe environment and ensuring that children are able to experience the fundamental right to be protected from all forms of child abuse.

Scope

It is a shared and collective responsibility of all members of the University Community to create a child safe culture and environment.

Legislative Context

- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards (Vic)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
- Federation University Australia Act 2010 (Vic)
- Federation University Australia Union Collective Agreement (UCA) 2015-2018
- The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)
- Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) – Standards for RTOs 2015
- VET Funding Contract
- Victorian TAFE Teaching Staff Multi-Business Agreement (MBA) 2009
- VRQA Guidelines to Minimum Standards 2015
- Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)
## Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>means a person under the age of 18 years.</td>
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<td>Child Abuse</td>
<td>child abuse can include physical or sexual harm, grooming, emotional or psychological harm, neglect, or family violence. It does not have to involve physical contact or force. Child abuse can include:</td>
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<td>• Sexually abusing or exploiting a child;</td>
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<td>• Talking to a child in a sexually explicit way;</td>
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<td>• Grooming a child for future sexual activity;</td>
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<td>• Forcing a child to watch pornography;</td>
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<td>• Being witness to family violence;</td>
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<td>• Engaging in sexual activity with a child under 16;</td>
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<td>• Failing to provide a child with an adequate standard of nutrition, supervision or medical care to the extent that the development of the child is placed at serious risk or is significantly impaired.</td>
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<td>Child Safe Standards</td>
<td>means the compulsory minimum standards (enacted pursuant to the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005) which apply to organisations in Victoria that provide services for children to help ensure the safety of children, as follows:</td>
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<td>• Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements;</td>
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<td>• A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety;</td>
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<td>• A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children;</td>
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<td>• Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel;</td>
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<td>• Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse;</td>
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<td>• Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse;</td>
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<td>• Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.</td>
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<td>Director</td>
<td>means a person employed by the University as a Director and, for the purposes of this policy and the associated procedure, also includes the Manager, Equity and Equal Opportunity and the Manager, Strategic Capital, Infrastructure and Projects.</td>
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<td>Grooming</td>
<td>when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. Grooming can include communicating electronically or face-to-face and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their/parent carer.</td>
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<td>Reasonable belief</td>
<td>a reasonable belief or a belief on reasonable grounds is not the same as having proof but is more than a mere rumor or speculation. A ‘reasonable belief’ is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a ‘reasonable belief’ might be formed if:</td>
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<td>• A child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;</td>
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<td>• A child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
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<td>Term</td>
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<td>• Someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;</td>
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<td>• Professional observations of the child’s behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused;</td>
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<td>• Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused;</td>
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<td>• A report has been made of a sexual relationship with a child under 16.</td>
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**Working with Children Check**

a legislative requirement and process of assessment as prescribed in the *Working with Children Act 2005* and subsequent Regulations as amended from time to time.

**University Community**

The University Community includes the following people and organisations:

• Staff members;
• Students;
• Members of the University Council and other University bodies and committees;
• All contractors and organisations engaged by the University within Victoria, including subcontractors; and
• Partner providers within Victoria.

**Policy Statement**

The University has a 'no tolerance' approach to all forms of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently with the policies and procedures in place.

The University is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children under the care and supervision of University staff, students, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors by:

• Preventing all forms of child abuse, identifying risks early, and removing / reducing those risks.
• Complying with the legal and moral obligations of the University Community in reporting allegations of child abuse, and alerting the appropriate authorities if there is a reasonable belief a child is in need of protection;
• Upholding the safety of all children, including Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability; and
• Providing regular training and education to members of the University Community on the risks of child abuse.

**Promote participation and empowerment of children**

The University actively promotes the participation and empowerment of all students, including children, through its Student Support Services. There are a wide range of services and support available:

• Educational and personal counselling;
• Welfare services;
• Chaplaincy;
• Equity and Equal Opportunity
• Disability and Learning Access Unit;
• Campus Life (including Childrens Centres and FedUni Living);
Organisational culture of safety through effective leadership arrangements

The University aims to promote an organisational culture of child safety through effective leadership by:

- Ensuring compliance with the Child Safe Standards;
- Regularly reviewing, updating and providing information on policies and procedures related to child safety; and
- Monitoring and evaluating the operation of the University’s Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Identify and reduce risks of child abuse

The University aims to eliminate all risks of child abuse wherever possible. Risks to children are identified during initial risk assessments and are managed for the duration of the activity or service: see the Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Control (HIRAC) for Child Safety.

Responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

The University’s Child Safe Procedure outlines the University’s framework for responding to, and reporting instances of, suspected child abuse (including mandatory reporting requirements).

Supporting documents

Internal Documents:

- Child Safe Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Children in University Activities Policy
- Children in University Activities Procedure
- Risk Management Framework
- Equal Opportunity and Valuing Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Security Policy
- Recruitment and Merit Selection Policy
- Recruitment and Merit Selection Procedure
- Working With Children (WWC) Check Policy
- Working With Children (WWC) Check Procedure

External Documents:

PROTECT Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: A Template for all Victorian Schools


Responsibility

• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) (as the Approval Authority) is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this policy.

• Director, Corporate Governance (as the Policy Sponsor) is responsible for maintaining the content of this policy as delegated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement).

Promulgation

The Child Safe Policy will be communicated throughout the University community in the form of:

1. an Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the ‘Recently Approved Documents’ page on the ‘Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University’ website to alert the University-wide community of the approved policy; and

2. distribution of e-mails to Deans and Directors.

Implementation

The Child Safe Policy will be implemented throughout the University via:

1. an Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the ‘Recently Approved Documents’ page on the ‘Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University’ website to alert the University-wide community of the approved policy;

2. staff induction sessions; and

3. training sessions