

WORKING WITH CHILDREN PROCEDURES – STUDENTS 2021

Issued by: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Current Approver: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Dated: 22 August 2021

Signature:

Name: Professor Philippa Pattison

1 Purpose and application

- (1) These procedures are to give effect to the [Working with Children and Vulnerable Policy 2021](#) (“the policy”).
- (2) These procedures apply to students undertaking study and related research which involves working with children.
- (3) For the avoidance of doubt, the [Working with Children Procedures – Staff and Affiliates 2021](#) apply where students are engaged in child-related work or activities as:
 - (a) a staff member (casual, fixed term or continuing); or
 - (b) an affiliate, including as a volunteer.

2 Commencement

These procedures commence on 1 September 2021.

3 Interpretation

- (1) Words and phrases used in these procedures and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings they have in the policy.
- (2) In these procedures:

SONIA means the student placement allocation database used by some faculties and University schools.

Sydney Student means the University’s student administration system.

4 Coursework students and child-related work

- (1) No coursework student may be allocated to a placement involving child-related work without a valid working with children check clearance, which has been verified in accordance with these procedures.
- (2) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) must:
 - (a) in consultation with faculties, identify award courses which require placements that might involve child-related work; and
 - (b) inform, or require the relevant faculty to inform, each student in an identified course of the actual or potential requirement for a working with children check clearance:
 - (i) before first enrolment; or
 - (ii) as soon as possible after the potential requirement for a clearance is identified.

Note: Refer to further information on [applying for a working with children check](#).

- (3) Faculties must:
 - (a) identify all placements which involve, or might involve, child-related work;
 - (b) identify all students proposed to undertake such placements;
 - (c) inform students through unit outlines and the [University website](#) of the requirement for, and how to obtain, a working with children check clearance;
 - (d) require students to notify Student Administration Services or SONIA, as applicable, of their:
 - (i) name;
 - (ii) Student Identification Number;
 - (iii) working with children check clearance number; and
 - (e) inform students of the deadline by which verification must be received.

Note: See the [Student Charter 2020](#)

- (4) Student Administrative Services must:
 - (a) verify the working with children check clearance status of each student notified to them for this purpose;
 - (b) complete the verification by the time required by the faculty; and
 - (c) record the outcome of the verification in the student's record in Sydney Student.
- (5) Coursework students who are required to hold a working with children check clearance must maintain the currency of their working with children check clearance while they are engaged in child-related work.

5 Higher degree by research students and child-related work

- (1) No higher degree by research student may be permitted to undertake child-related work, whether as part of a placement or as part of research, without a valid working with children check clearance, which has been verified in accordance with these procedures.

- (2) Lead supervisors must:
- (a) identify whether the student's research or placement will, or might, involve child-related work before the student commences any such research or placement;
 - (b) require the student to obtain a working with children check clearance before undertaking any child-related work;
 - (c) verify and record working with children check clearances notified to them;
Note: See [Recordkeeping Policy 2017](#).
 - (d) require all students undertaking research to obtain ethics approval:
 - (i) jointly with a supervisor; or
 - (ii) by being named on an ethics protocol as part of a research group: before commencing research work;
Note: See also [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy 2020](#).
 - (e) inform the student of this, and explain the requirements of the [policy](#) and these procedures;
 - (f) create and maintain the records required by the [policy](#), in an appropriate University system. These records must include:
 - (i) the working with children check clearance number;
 - (ii) the date of expiry of the clearance; and
 - (iii) the name of the person who verified the clearance and the date on which this was done.
Note: See clause 12 of the policy.
 - (g) obtain and maintain the currency of their own working with children check clearance while they are engaged in child-related work; and
 - (h) require higher degree research students to comply with the policy and these procedures.

6 Obtaining a working with children check clearance

- (1) Coursework students must submit their working with children check clearance number as soon as practicable after it is received, to either Student Administration Services or SONIA, as directed by their school or faculty.
- (2) Higher degree by research students must provide their working with children check clearance number in writing to their lead supervisor as soon as practicable after it is received.

7 Renewing a working with children check clearance

- (1) Students who are required to hold a working with children check clearance are responsible for ensuring that it is renewed when necessary.

- (2) The relevant faculty is responsible for:
 - (a) requiring that coursework students maintain a valid working with children check clearance for any placement that involves child-related work; and
 - (b) monitoring the currency of that clearance.
- (3) Lead supervisors are responsible for:
 - (a) requiring that higher degree research students maintain a valid working with children check clearance for any research or placement that involves child-related work; and
 - (b) monitoring the currency of that clearance.

8 Risk assessment and management

- (1) Wherever the policy requires a risk management plan to be prepared and adopted, the person responsible for this must first undertake a risk assessment to identify and assess hazards.
 - (a) Risk assessments in relation to working with children must be conducted using the template in Schedule One.
 - (b) A person conducting a risk assessment:
 - (i) may seek support from the Risk Management unit; and
 - (ii) must create and maintain records of the risk assessment.

Note: See the [Recordkeeping Policy 2017](#)

- (2) Examples of hazards from which risks may arise when working with children include:
 - (a) age or age range of the children;
 - (b) nature of the activity;
 - (c) the suitability of University students to engage in activities with children;
 - (d) capacity of University students to predict, respond to and manage the behaviour of the children involved in the activity;
 - (e) equipment required for the activity and its suitability;
 - (f) potential accidents and injury;
 - (g) consent of parents or guardians for the participation of the child in the activity and the assent of the child to participate in the activity; and
 - (h) photography or filming of the activity by organisers or participants, including on personal electronic devices.
- (3) The risk management plan must identify the potential risks and document the likelihood and severity of the risks as well as strategies to mitigate the risk.

Note: See the risk assessment plans, in Schedule One and the [Risk Management Policy 2017](#).

- (4) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) must:
 - (a) notify the relevant responsible officer of any breach of this policy as soon as possible after being made aware of it, and request their support to resolve the breach; and
 - (b) confer with the Office of General Counsel in relation to any person who has an interim bar or who is refused a working with children check clearance.
- (5) Internal audit will:
 - (a) conduct a regular audit of working with children check clearances and associated records; and
 - (b) determine the scope, process and timing of this audit.

9 Recordkeeping and privacy

- (1) In accordance with recordkeeping obligations, Student Administration Services will maintain records indicating that students working with children checks have been verified for 99 years.
- (2) Student Administration Services will maintain records of national police checks in relevant student files for 99 years.
- (3) DVC (Education) will require lead supervisors to establish and maintain records that student working with children checks have been verified for 99 years, in an appropriate University recordkeeping system.
- (4) Before:
 - (a) requiring students to obtain or provide working with children check clearances or national police checks; or
 - (b) recording student working with children check clearances and verification details or national police checks;

faculties and lead supervisors must explain to affected students:

- (c) why the information is being requested;
- (d) why it is being collected;
- (e) how it will be used; and
- (f) how it will be recorded.

10 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the *Working with Children Procedures 2014*, which commenced on 12 March 2014, which are rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document:

NOTES

Working with Children Procedures - Students 2021

Date adopted: 22 August 2021

Date commenced: 1 September 2021

Original Administrator: Pro-Vice Chancellor (Student Life)

Current document owner: Pro-Vice Chancellor (Student Life)

Review date: September 2026

Rescinded documents: *Working with Children Procedures 2014*

Related documents:

[*Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012*](#)

[*Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013*](#)

[*Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 NSW*](#)

[*State Records Act 1998 \(NSW\)*](#)

[*The Children's Guardian Act 2019*](#)

[*University of Sydney \(Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions\) Rule 2016*](#)

[*Casual Employment Policy*](#)

[*Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates*](#)

[*Code of Conduct – Students*](#)

[*Health Clinics and Clinical Services Policy 2020*](#)

[*Health Clinics and Clinical Services Procedures 2020*](#)

[*Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy 2020*](#)

[*Honorary Titles Policy*](#)

[*Recruitment and Selection Policy*](#)

[*Research Code of Conduct 2019*](#)

[*Risk Management Policy 2017*](#)

[*Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2013*](#)

[*Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy 2021*](#)

[*Office of the Children's Guardian website*](#)

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision **Amendment**

Commencing

Schedule One: Working with children

Risk Assessment Template for managers

(on completion fill out your risk management plan, Schedule Two)

BELOW ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HAZARDS AND RELATED STRATEGIES AND RISK LEVELS. COMPLETE THE RISK ASSESSMENT APPROPRIATE TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISCIPLINE AND THE RELEVANT CHILD-RELATED STUDENT PLACEMENTS OR RESEARCH.

Identify hazards	Existing risk management strategy	Likelihood	Risk level	New risk management strategy	Who is responsible?
<i>Lack of organisational culture of child safety.</i>	<i>New Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Student Procedures; training to embed culture of child safety.</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Strategies to embed organisational culture of child safety are reviewed;</i>	<i>DVC(E)</i>
<i>Local area lacks knowledge of requirements for child-related placements or research.</i>	<i>New Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Student Procedures; training to embed culture of child safety.</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Medium</i>		<i>Faculty and School General Managers; Lead Supervisors</i>
<i>Student placement or research activity not identified as child-related work</i>	<i>Child-related work in placements or research is identified by consulting the WWC and Vulnerable Adults Policy; staff intranet guidelines and Faculty or School General Managers.</i> <i>Mandatory completion of internal training.</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>High</i>		

Identify hazards	Existing risk management strategy	Likelihood	Risk level	New risk management strategy	Who is responsible?
<i>An inappropriate student is engaged in child-related work.</i>		<i>Unlikely</i>	<i>Medium</i>		
<i>A student is not screened prior to commencement of their placement or research activity which involves children.</i>		<i>Possible</i>	<i>High</i>		

Schedule Two: Working with children

Risk Management Plan Template *(complete after your risk assessment in Schedule One)*

CHILD SAFE RISK MANAGEMENT EXPLANATION

Setting	Who is involved, what is the activity, where is it held, when is it – times and dates, how will it happen?				
Risk of Harm	Lack of supervision (neglect) <i>(Identify the harm to the children you wish to address)</i>				
Identified risk	Risk level	Strategies and interventions	Risk level	Monitoring and governance	Contact person and review date
<i>Identify risk (even if it is unlikely to happen it is recommended that you document and identify mitigation strategies)</i>	<i>Use the risk table* to identify the level of risk</i>	<p><i>Consider what the University can do to reduce the likelihood or consequence of the risk eventuating</i></p> <p><i>Consider the environment, the behaviour and interactions between students and children.</i></p> <p><i>Do you have to establish new processes, or is it a case of existing policies or processes needing to be reinforced?</i></p> <p><i>Interventions do not need to be expensive; they just need to be effective and consistently applied</i></p>	<i>Has the introduction of these strategies, interventions or changes reduced the risk-level?</i>	<p><i>Who is responsible for implementing the strategies, interventions and changes that are needed and when do these changes need to be fully implemented by?</i></p> <p><i>Have you included them as regular agenda items at student lectures or relevant staff meetings?</i></p> <p><i>Will they be discussed after the completion of research activities or placement evaluations? Will someone be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the strategies implemented? If so, how will they do this?</i></p>	<i>When will this risk management plan be reviewed for continuous improvement?</i>

*See risk table at end of this template.

RISK MANAGEMENT TEMPLATE

Setting					
Risk of Harm					
Identified risk	Risk level	Strategies and interventions	Risk level	Monitoring and governance	Contact person and review date

Risk Table Levels	
Low risk	Risks which may be managed by routine procedures
Medium risk	Risks which need attention and interventions put in place
High risk	Risks which need urgent attention, require further investigation and need significant interventions put in place