

Child Safety Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The purpose of this procedure is to demonstrate the strong commitment of Melbourne Polytechnic to comply with reporting obligations to follow the process to ensure the care, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability, from all forms of harm and abuse.

(2) The intent of this procedure is to describe the process and assign responsibility for the application and approval for child safety for all staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors.

Section 2 - Definitions

(3) For the purpose of this procedure, the following definitions apply:

- a. Act: [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005](#)
- b. Aboriginal Child: A person under the age of 18 who is of, identifies as and is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- c. Child: Any person under the age of 18 years
- d. Child Abuse: constitutes any act committed against a child involving physical violence, sexual offences, serious emotional or psychological harm and serious neglect
- e. Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds: A child who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic associations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis
- f. Children with a disability: A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury, intellectual disability, or developmental delay that affects a child's ability to undertake everyday activities
- g. Child Safety: measures to protect children from all forms of child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse
- h. Child Safety officer: designated roles within Melbourne Polytechnic who support and assist staff and students with understanding their reporting obligations and the process.
- i. Child Protection: An activity or initiative designed to protect children from all forms of harm, particularly arising from child abuse
- j. Contact with Children: Working on an activity with children that involves or may involve contact, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment.
- k. Cultural Safety: Is an environment, which is safe for children, where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need
- l. Mandatory Reporting: The legal requirement to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect
- m. Personnel: are either employed by an organisation, engaged by an organisation on a subcontract basis, or engaged by an organisation on a voluntary or unpaid basis
- n. Reasonable Belief: When staff are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of

considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a 'reasonable belief'. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

Section 3 - Responsibility and Accountability

Child Safety, Reporting Process, Roles and Responsibilities

Task	Responsibility	Notes
Child Safe Recruitment Process and Records		
For positions that involve contact with children and young people, recruitment should be based on selection criteria which clearly demonstrates commitment to child safety to assist the Institute in ensuring that the most appropriate staff are employed.	Department Managers	Selection policies and guidelines, including pre-screening activities, are to reflect an understanding of, and commitment to, a child safe environment.
Positions that deal with children and young people will be required to undertake a National Criminal History Record Check prior to commencement of employment.	All prospective/new staff members	
Position that are involved in child-related work as defined in the Working with Children Act 2005 , including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check (WWC) and to provide evidence that the WWC Check is valid at all times whilst employed by the department.	All staff	
Positions that may have contact with children and young people due to their working environment are to be assessed as to whether a WWC Check is required to minimise the risk of harm to children and young people.	Department Managers	
Reasonable belief, suspicion or disclosure of child abuse		
If suspicion or belief that a child or young person is being abused action must take place.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	

Task	Responsibility	Notes
<p>All staff are to follow this procedure if they have any reasonable beliefs or suspicion, or if someone has disclosed to them that a child or young person has been abused, or at risk of being abused.</p> <p>This includes the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. where there are reasonable concerns about significant harm to a child; 2. physical abuse of, or non-accidental or unexplained injury to, a child; 3. a disclosure of sexual abuse by a child or witness, or a combination of factors suggesting the likelihood of sexual abuse, such as the child exhibiting concerning behaviours; 4. emotional or psychological abuse and ill treatment of a child impacting on the child's stability and healthy development; 5. persistent neglect, poor care or lack of appropriate supervision where there is a likelihood of significant harm to the child, or the child's stability and development; 6. persistent family violence or parental substance misuse, psychiatric illness or intellectual disability where there is a likelihood of significant harm to the child, or the child's stability and development; 7. where a child's actions or behaviour may place them at risk of significant harm and the parents or caregivers are unwilling, or unable to protect the child; 8. where a child appears to have been abandoned, or where the child's parents are dead or incapacitated and no other person is caring properly for the child; 9. grooming of a child under 16 years of age by a person aged 18 years or older. 	<p>All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors</p>	
<p>Follow the process of the Four Critical Actions</p>		
<p>If any staff members have knowledge of a child or young person who is at risk they must first ensure that the child is out of the risk of danger and safe.</p> <p>If a child or young person is in immediate danger, staff need to phone 000.</p>	<p>All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors</p>	<p>Please follow the Melbourne Polytechnic Child Safety Student Support Process.</p>
<p>Staff are required to follow the Melbourne Polytechnic Four Critical Actions (Child Safety Officers) for Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse.</p>	<p>All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors</p>	
<p>Staff must contact a Child Safety Officer in regards to any reporting.</p>	<p>All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors</p>	<p>The Child Safety Officer can support staff and/or students through the Four Actions required for reporting. The Child Safety Officer is limited to supporting the person who is required to report. The Child Safety Officer cannot make the report for the other person responsible of the knowledge of abuse.</p>

Task	Responsibility	Notes
Staff that fail to comply with their reporting obligations of child abuse may face criminal charges. They will also face disciplinary actions in accordance to Melbourne Polytechnic's Code of Conduct , Employment Policy and/or Enterprise Agreement.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	
Record storage of all incidents of disclosures, suspicions or beliefs of child abuse		
Staff obligated to report are to complete the Melbourne Polytechnic Child Safety Report Form.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	
Staff must respect confidentiality and comply with the Melbourne Polytechnic Privacy policy when dealing with suspected child abuse.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	
On completion of the Melbourne Polytechnic Child Safety Report Form the document must be submitted to a Child Safety Officer immediately for correct storage.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	
The Child Safety Report Form will be stored in accordance to the privacy and confidential requirements for a minimum of 45 years.	Child Safety Officer	
Reportable Conduct Scheme		
All staff are required to report sexual crimes against children (under the age of 16) to police under section 327 of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) . It is a criminal offence to not comply with this requirement.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	<p>Reportable Conduct must be complied with if any adult has a reasonable belief that there has been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sexual offence committed to a child, with a child or in the presence of a child • sexual misconduct • physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child • behaviour causing significant emotional or psychological harm • significant neglect of a child
All reporting staff or adults must report all suspicions of child abuse to a Child Safety Officer.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	
The Child Safety Officer will then be responsible for informing the Melbourne Polytechnic Chief Executive.	Child Safety Officer	
Report allegations to the police and begin a formal investigation.	Chief Executive or nominee	The Reportable Conduct scheme imposes obligations on the Head of an organisation to report child abuse by any Melbourne Polytechnic staff member or volunteer to the Commission for Children and Young People .

Task	Responsibility	Notes
<p>The Chief Executive will report to the Commission and take the following steps: Within three business days notify the commissioner with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the worker or volunteer • Date of birth • Police report • Organisation contact details • Head of organisation's name <p>Initial advice on the nature of the allegation Provide an update to the commissioner with a 30 calendar day including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the allegation • Details of your response to the allegation • Details about any disciplinary or other action proposed <p>Any written response from the worker or volunteer about the allegation and the proposed disciplinary or other Provide advice on investigation and the name and contact details of the investigator as soon as practicable. Notify the Commissioner of all outcomes of investigation, provide a copy of findings and reasons for the findings. Provide all details about any disciplinary or other action proposed and reasons for taking or not taking action. This needs to be submitted as soon as practicable. Provide the Commissioner with any further documents as requested.</p>	Chief Executive or nominee	
Failure to comply with reporting obligations of child abuse may face criminal charges.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	
Staff training requirements for Child Safety		
Staff who are in contact with children are required to complete child safety training on commencement of employment at Melbourne Polytechnic.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	Child Safety is covered in staff induction on commencement of employment.
Staff are required to refresh child safety training every twelve months.	All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors	

Section 4 - Supporting Documents and Templates

- (4) [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- (5) [Employment Policy](#)
- (6) [Student Discipline Policy](#)
- (7) [Supporting Students with Disabilities Policy](#)
- (8) [Working with Children and Police Check Policy](#)
- (9) [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005](#)

(10) Child Safety Report Form.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	7th August 2020
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Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Responsible Executive	Cathy Frazer Executive Director Student Engagement International and Community Partnerships
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