

# WORKING WITH CHILDREN PROCEDURES - STAFF AND AFFILIATES 2021

Issued by: Chief Human Resources Officer  
Dated: 30 August 2021  
Last amended: 1 April 2023 (administrative amendments)  
3 April 2024 (administrative amendments)  
Signature:  
Name: Karen Haywood

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## 1 Purpose and application

- (1) These procedures are to give effect to the [Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy](#) (“the policy”).
- (2) These procedures apply to staff and affiliates, including volunteers.

## 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.

### **contingent worker**

means an individual working at the University and engaged either:

- under an agreement with a labour hire agency; or
- directly under a contract for services as a self-employed individual.

Contingent workers are not employees of the University.

**Note:** See also the [Workforce Engagements and Payments Policy](#).

### **Recruitment Operations**

means the team within the University's Human Resources professional services unit with responsibility for supporting the recruitment, selection and appointment of University staff.

#### 4 Establishing a child-related program

- (1) When assessing a business case submitted under clause 9(2) of the policy, the Faculty General Manager, University school General Manager or Head of Administrative Area (“the approver”) and the relevant Dean, or responsible officer where applicable, must consider:
  - (a) whether the program complies with the [policy](#);
  - (b) the relevance of the program to strategic objectives of each of:
    - (i) the organisational unit; and
    - (ii) University;
  - (c) availability of funding; and
  - (d) the risk management plan and potential risks in conducting the program.
- (2) If an approver approves a child-related program they must inform Human Resources of the approval as soon as possible.

#### 5 Appointing staff to child-related work

- (1) The relevant hiring manager must identify any child-related work when creating a position and raising a job requisition and inform:
  - (a) the responsible officer; and
  - (b) Human Resources;through the Human Resources Management system.
- (2) Recruitment Operations must include a working with children check clearance as an inherent requirement of such a role in any position advertisement.
- (3) Human Resources must issue offers of employment in such roles, including casual roles, conditionally upon the successful applicant holding or obtaining a working with children check clearance.
- (4) The relevant manager must inform Human Resources at least two weeks before an existing staff member transfers to a new position or commences work on a project which involves child-related work.

**Note:** See subclause 5(8). The manager must not permit the staff member to commence such work until their working with children clearance has been verified.
- (5) Human Resources will verify and record the outcome of working with children checks:
  - (a) before a prospective staff member commences work with the University;
  - (b) before an existing staff member transfers to a new position or commences work on a project which involves child-related work; and
  - (c) as directed by the Chief Human Resources Officer.
- (6) Human Resources will inform relevant managers of the outcome of a working with children check before a staff member commences child-related work.
- (7) The relevant manager must confirm with Human Resources that:
  - (a) a staff member’s clearance has been verified; and

- (b) that the verified clearance, and its expiry date, has been recorded in the University's Human Resource Management system before the person commences child-related work.
- (8) For staff undertaking research involving child-related work:
  - (a) Research Integrity and Ethics will inform the Office of the Provost of all ethics approvals which require working with children check clearances; and
  - (b) the Office of the Provost will:
    - (i) verify and record working with children check clearances before a staff member commences participation in any research which involves child-related work; and
    - (ii) provide these records to Human Resources, who will record the information in the Human Resource Management system.

**Note:** See the [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012 \(NSW\)](#), clauses 8 and 9 of the policy and the [staff intranet](#) for more information on identifying child-related work.

## 6 Engaging affiliates (including volunteers) in child-related work

- (1) This clause applies to the engagement of all affiliates, including but not limited to
    - (a) volunteers;
    - (b) academic affiliates (including clinical and other honorary title holders); and
    - (c) contingent workers.
  - (2) Before engaging an affiliate, the relevant delegate must:
    - (a) identify whether the affiliate's role will involve child-related work; and
    - (b) if so, inform Human Resources of the individual's:
      - (i) full name;
      - (ii) date of birth; and
      - (iii) working with children check clearance number.
  - (3) For affiliates other than volunteers, this information must be provided by recording it in the Human Resource Management system.
  - (4) For volunteers, this information must be provided by completing and submitting a [Working with Children Program Registration form](#).
- Note:** While some affiliates, for example, clinical honorary title holders, are required by their local health district to hold a working with children check clearance, when they are affiliated to the University the University will verify their clearance status.
- (5) Human Resources will:
    - (a) record working with children check clearances:
      - (i) in the Human Resource Management system for affiliates other than volunteers; and
      - (ii) in the Services Portal for volunteers;
    - (b) verify the validity and currency of the clearance; and
    - (c) inform the relevant delegate of the outcome of the verification.

- (6) The responsible officer must not permit an affiliate to commence any child-related work until notified that the individual's working with children check clearance has been verified.

**Note:** See the [staff intranet](#) for information on managing working with children checks for volunteers.

## 7 Obtaining a working with children check clearance

- (1) Any person who will be undertaking child-related work as part of their employment, or affiliate engagement at the University must obtain and maintain a working with children check clearance.

**Note:** Applications are made through the office of the [NSW Children's Guardian](#).

- (a) Individuals are responsible for meeting any costs charged by the NSW Children's Guardian for obtaining the working with children check clearance.

**Note:** Information about charges, and exemptions from them, is available from the office of the [NSW Children's Guardian](#).

- (2) Staff, and affiliates other than volunteers, who are required to hold a current working with children check clearance must provide their working with children check clearance number to Human Resources by submitting it with their new starter documentation.

- (a) as soon as possible after they receive it from the Children's Guardian; and  
(b) prior to commencing with the University.

- (3) Research staff participating, or proposing to participate, in research involving child-related work must provide their working with children check clearance number to the Office of the Provost by email to [child-safety@sydney.edu.au](mailto:child-safety@sydney.edu.au) as soon as practicable after receiving it.

**Note:** See subclause 5(8).

- (4) Volunteers must provide their working with children check clearance number to the relevant delegate, who will provide it to Human Resources as specified in subclause 6(2).

**Note:** See the staff intranet for guidance on [applying for a working with children check](#).

## 8 Renewing a working with children check clearance

- (1) Individuals who are required to hold a working with children check clearance are responsible for ensuring that it is renewed when necessary.
- (2) Human Resources will provide notice to staff and affiliates (other than volunteers) and their respective managers that they must renew their working with children check clearance:
- (a) by email through the Human Resource Management system; and  
(b) at least three months before the expiry of the clearance.
- (3) Faculties or operational areas responsible for conducting programs or events that involve child-related work are also responsible for requiring and checking that any affiliates involved, including volunteers, hold current working with children check clearances.

## 9 Risk assessment and management

- (1) Risk assessments required by the policy must be conducted using the template in Schedule One.
- (2) A person conducting a risk assessment:
  - (a) may seek support in conducting a risk assessment from Risk Management; and
  - (b) must maintain records of the risk assessment.

**Note:** See the [Recordkeeping Policy](#)
- (3) 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 staff, affiliates or students to engage in activities with children;
  - (d) capacity of University staff, affiliates or 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.
- (4) Examples of hazards from which risks may arise when working with vulnerable adults include:
  - (a) lack of mental capacity;
  - (b) advanced age;
  - (c) being physically dependent on others;
  - (d) low self-esteem;
  - (e) previous history of abuse;
  - (f) negative experiences of disclosing abuse;
  - (g) social isolation; and
  - (h) lack of access to health and social services or high quality information.
- (5) 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 template in Schedule Two, the [staff intranet](#) and the [Risk Management Policy 2017](#).
- (6) The Chief Human Resources Officer 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:

- (i) any person who has an interim bar or who is refused a working with children check clearance; or
  - (ii) any breach of policy which might involve reportable conduct or a reportable conviction.
- (7) 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.

## **10 Recordkeeping and privacy**

- (1) In accordance with recordkeeping obligations, Human Resources will maintain records of working with children check clearances and verifications in relevant staff and affiliate personnel files for 75 years.
- (2) Human Resources will maintain records of national police checks in relevant staff and affiliate personnel files for 75 years.
- (3) Before obtaining and recording working with children check clearances or national police checks, Human Resources will explain to the individuals providing the relevant information:
  - (a) why it is being collected;
  - (b) how it will be used; and
  - (c) how it will be recorded.

## **11 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 - Staff and Affiliates 2021**

Date adopted:	30 August 2021
Date commenced:	1 September 2021
Date amended:	1 April 2023 (administrative amendments) 3 April 2024 (administrative amendments)
Administrator:	Chief Human Resources Officer
Review date:	1 September 2026

Rescinded documents: *Working with Children Procedures 2014*

Related documents:

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

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

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

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

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

[\*University of Sydney \(Delegations of Authority\) Rule\*](#)

[\*Casual Employment Policy\*](#)

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

[\*Student Charter\*](#)

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

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

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

[\*Honorary Titles Policy\*](#)

[\*Recruitment and Appointment Policy\*](#)

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

[\*Risk Management Policy\*](#)

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

## AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
7(1)note; 7(1)(a)note	Links to websites updated	1 April 2023
related documents	internal policy references updated	
Throughout	Administrative amendments to remove the year in policy references.	3 April 2024



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# 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 YOUR AREA AND THE RELEVANT CHILD-RELATED ROLE OR DUTIES.**

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, manager's guide and 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>Human Resources</i>
<i>New manager lacks knowledge of requirements for child-related roles.</i>	<i>New Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, manager's guide and training to embed culture of child safety.</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Medium</i>		<i>Manager</i>
<i>Position or duties not identified as child-related work</i>	<i>Roles/duties are identified as child-related work by using the manager's guide on the staff intranet.</i>  <i>Mandatory completion Children's Guardian online training modules.</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>High</i>		

Identify hazards	Existing risk management strategy	Likelihood	Risk level	New risk management strategy	Who is responsible?
<i>Recruitment of an inappropriate person</i>		<i>Unlikely</i>	<i>Medium</i>		
<i>Volunteer is not screened as they are engaged for a short-term period only.</i>		<i>Possible</i>	<i>High</i>		

# Schedule Two: Working with children

## Risk Management Plan Template (complete after your risk assessment, Schedule One)

### CHILD SAFE RISK MANAGEMENT EXPLANATION

<b>Setting</b>	<b>Who</b> is involved, <b>what</b> is the activity, <b>where</b> is it held, <b>when</b> is it – times and dates, <b>how</b> will it happen?				
<b>Risk of Harm</b>	<b>Lack of supervision (neglect)</b> <i>(Identify the harm to the children you wish to address)</i>				
<b>Identified risk</b>	<b>Risk level</b>	<b>Strategies and interventions</b>	<b>Risk level</b>	<b>Monitoring and governance</b>	<b>Contact person and review date</b>
<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 organisation can do to reduce the likelihood or consequence of the risk eventuating</i></p> <p><i>Consider the environment, the behaviour and interactions between adults 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 staff meetings?</i></p> <p><i>Will they be discussed at team meetings?</i></p> <p><i>Will they be discussed after the completion of activities or program 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	
<b>Low risk</b>	Risks which may be managed by routine procedures
<b>Medium risk</b>	Risks which need attention and interventions put in place
<b>High risk</b>	Risks which need urgent attention, require further investigation and need significant interventions put in place