



Child Safety and Child Abuse Response and Reporting procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This Procedure is effective from 1 July 2022.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This Procedure outlines the process that students, staff and associates are required to follow when they have concerns about the safety of a person under the age of 18 ('child').

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to all students, staff and associates of the University.

Section 4 - Policy

(4) This Procedure is pursuant to the [Child Safety policy](#).

Section 5 - Procedure

Child abuse reporting obligations

(5) This Procedure includes information on how to report child abuse concerns within the University and to external authorities. It does not supersede legislative reporting requirements and is intended to be complementary to those requirements.

Identifying child abuse

(6) Students, staff or associates may have reasonable grounds for believing a child who is a student or visitor or who comes to the attention of a staff member, student or associate in the course of their employment, study, research or other connection to the University, is in need of protection, including in any of the following circumstances:

- a. where there are reasonable concerns about significant harm to a child;
- b. physical abuse of, or non-accidental or unexplained injury to, a child;
- c. 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;
- d. emotional or psychological abuse and ill treatment of a child impacting on the child's stability and healthy development;
- e. child exploitation; committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a

child/possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material/committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming/using a minor for profit, labour, sexual gratification, or some other personal or financial advantage

- f. 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;
- g. 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;
- h. 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;
- i. 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;
- j. grooming of a child under 16 years of age by a person aged 18 years or older;
- k. definitions as defined by the World Health Organisation relating to types of child abuse can be found at the [Australian Institute of Family Studies](#).

(7) Students, staff and associates must respect confidentiality and comply with the [Privacy policy](#) when dealing with suspected child abuse. Details of the case and the identity of the child and their family may only be discussed with those directly involved in the management of the child's situation and to meet the reporting obligations set out in this Procedure and in the legislation. Advice may be sought from the Privacy Officer via privacy@deakin.edu.au.

Mandatory Reporting Requirements

(8) The [Children, Youth and Families Act 2005](#), imposes an obligation on medical practitioners, nurses, midwives, psychologists, social workers, youth or child workers (welfare/justice), teachers, school principals and police officers to make a report to Child Protection if, while acting in the course of their employment or professional duties, they reasonably form the belief that a child is in need of protection. It is a criminal offence to not comply.

(9) All adults in Victoria 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.

Role of Deakin Child Safe Advisers

(10) Deakin Child Safe Advisers are staff who volunteer to be responsible for:

- a. receiving and recording reports of child abuse concerns from staff, students and associates;
- b. providing appropriate referrals for external reporting and support; and
- c. notifying relevant University staff as outlined below.

(11) Reporting to a Child Safe Adviser does not remove legal obligations to report concerns to Child Protection and/or Police. Staff can contact a Child Safe Advisers via the contact details listed on the [Child Safety DeakinHub site](#).

(12) The Deakin Child Safe Adviser is responsible for appropriately actioning the disclosure, including where relevant:

- a. ensuring internal and external reporting requirements are met including the Child Safe Critical Incident Report, and informing General Counsel and the Executive Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion;
- b. notifying the Chief People and Culture Officer if a staff member is involved and the Dean of Students if a student is involved;
- c. providing internal or external referrals for support for an affected child who is a student of the University, the discloser and any other impacted students, staff or associates, as required;
- d. informing and liaising with the parent/guardian of the child about whom the concerns have been raised;

- e. keeping appropriate records.

How to report child abuse concerns

(13) In a situation of grave and immediate life threatening risk to a child, staff, students and associates must notify police immediately by telephone on 000.

(14) If there is a risk to the immediate safety of a child (non-life-threatening), staff, students or associates should immediately telephone [Child Protection](#) in their local government area (business hours) or the Child Protection Crisis Line after hours on 13 12 78. If the life-threatening or other immediate risk is occurring on campus, they should also telephone Deakin Security on 1800 062 579. Child Protection will only investigate if the abuse is by an adult against a child aged under 16 years.

(15) In relation to all child abuse concerns, staff, students and associates must:

- a. report their child abuse concerns to external authorities as soon as possible;
- b. comply with any applicable mandatory reporting requirements by reporting suspected child abuse matters to Child Protection; and
- c. if the incident relates to a student, staff member or associate or arises in the course of their employment, study or other connection to the University contact a Deakin Child Safe Adviser.

How to seek support

(16) Staff may seek support from their manager or supervisor in reporting their child abuse concern or from a Deakin Child Safe Adviser.

(17) Students, staff or associates who are aged under 18 years and are concerned about their own safety are encouraged to seek help and support by contacting a Deakin Child Safe Adviser.

(18) Further information for Deakin staff is located on the [Child Safety DeakinHub site](#).

Section 6 - Definitions

(19) There are no definitions arising under this Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	1st July 2022
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Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Responsible Executive	Kerrie Parker Executive Vice-President Resources evpr@deakin.edu.au
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