

Name of Procedures	Children of Staff and Students on University Premises Procedure	
Description of Procedures	This Procedure provides guidance where staff and students who are the carers of children wish to bring them into a learning and working environment on University premises.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> New procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision
Description of Revision	<p>The following amendments have been made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correction of the name of the Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy. • clarifying the responsibilities of supervisors and teaching staff when they approve the attendance of children in work and/or learning environments. 	

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1 Background

The University seeks to provide a "family friendly" work and learning environment. The Children of Staff and Students on University Premises Procedure supports this aim and also recognises the University's duty of care to all of its staff, students and visitors. The Procedure seeks to address both health and safety and equal opportunity issues by striking a balance between the safety of children on University premises, limiting their exposure to risks, and the maintenance of equity standards.

The following ACU Policies describe the frameworks that support a safe, healthy and equitable ACU workplace:

- Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy,
- Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, and
- Equal Opportunity Policy.

This Procedure operates in conjunction with these policies and provides guidance in relation to the arrangements for bringing children onto University premises for staff and students who are carers and those making decisions on such matters. Good judgement, discretion and reasonableness are expected to be applied in the application of this Procedure to specific circumstances.

2 Glossary of Terms

For the purposes of this Procedure:

"Child" or **"children"** refers to a person or persons under age 18 who is not enrolled as a student of ACU.

"Carer" refers to a parent, guardian or other person responsible for a child or children.

"Unsafe and/or restricted areas" are areas in which children are not permitted and include:

- science and anatomy laboratories and laboratory preparation areas;
- visual arts workshops or studios;
- printer/copier rooms;
- technical workshops and studios;
- nursing laboratories and clinics;
- exercise science and physiotherapy laboratories and clinics;
- kitchens and other food preparation areas;
- storerooms or areas where hazardous substances are being kept;
- construction sites and areas where minor works or maintenance are being carried out.

3 Principles

ACU recognises that:

- staff and students who are carers may need to bring children onto University premises from time to time;

- the safety and wellbeing of all persons on University Premises, including children, is of the utmost importance; and
- the education function and effective operation of the University must be maintained and the presence of children on campus needs to be accommodated within this requirement.

Consequently, it is necessary to identify:

- the responsibilities of the carer supervising the child or children;
- the requisite level of supervision; and
- appropriate/inappropriate areas for children to be present.

ACU also recognises that care must be taken to ensure that the implementation of this Procedure:

- does not result in the discrimination, directly or indirectly, of a staff member, student or prospective student on the grounds of sex, or carer responsibilities; and
- supports the ACU's commitment to flexibility of working and learning arrangements to enable staff and students to meet family responsibilities in special circumstances.

4 Publicly Accessible University Premises

While the University precincts are private property, some areas are publicly accessible and permission to enter them is not normally required. Examples of such areas are:

- gardens and courtyards;
- cafes and cafeterias;
- chapels and reflection rooms; and,
- foyers and lobbies.

Children are welcome on campus for approved University activities such as Open Day, concerts and performances, and guided tours. Staff, students or other adults accompanying children in such circumstances, and in the publicly accessible areas, are at all times responsible for their care, safety and welfare.

Libraries are accessible to the public and are both a learning environment for staff and students, and a working environment for library staff. All users of the library are required to respect and uphold conditions necessary to provide an appropriate atmosphere for study, research and work. Staff, students and other adults accompanying children within the library are responsible for ensuring that the conduct of the children in their care is appropriate.

5 Permission to bring a child or children on University Premises

Staff and students are expected to obtain prior permission to bring a child or children under their care into a working or learning environment on ACU premises. This is necessary to allow supervisors and teaching staff to carry out their responsibilities under this Procedure (refer to Section 8.3 and 8.4). Staff and students who are carers should refer to Section 8.5 for their responsibilities under this Procedure.

6 Considering requests to bring children onto University premises

In considering requests to bring children into the learning and working environment supervisors and teaching staff should:

- use good judgement and discretion to consider each request on a case by case basis; and
- be mindful of the need to be able to demonstrate the reasonableness of a decision.

All decisions relating to a request to be accompanied by a child or children need to take account of factors such as:

- the particular circumstances that have led to the request,
- the availability of other options,
- the operating environment,
- the health and safety issues and risks,
- the likely impact on students, staff and visitors,
- the needs of others and the potential for any detrimental effect on the ability of any person to teach, work or learn effectively, and
- in the case of classroom activity, the nature of the subject matter being covered (i.e. safety/content).

If a student requests to be accompanied by a child or children and the teaching staff member is concerned that the content may be inappropriate or upsetting for children, the teaching staff member should advise the student of what will be covered. In such cases (providing that the venue has been assessed as posing no other risks to children), the student, as the carer of the child or children, is responsible for making the decision on whether it is appropriate for the child or children to be present.

7 Withdrawing permission for a child or children to be present in a learning or working environment

Staff and students with children on University premises can be required to remove a child or children if, in the judgement of the supervisor, teaching staff member or person in charge of the area:

- the health or safety of the child or children is at risk;
- the child or children are presenting a health or safety risk to others; or
- the work of staff or students is being disrupted or inconvenienced by the child or children.

In the case of staff with children, the person's supervisor has the authority to require that a child or children be removed from the work and/or learning environment.

In the case of students with children, the teaching staff member involved, or in some cases the person in charge of the area has the authority to require that a child or children be removed from the work and/or learning environment.

In the library, any member of staff on duty has the authority to require that a child or children be removed from the area.

8 Responsibilities

Everyone using University facilities has responsibilities in relation to the practical implementation of this Procedure, particularly in terms of making ACU a safe place. Specific responsibilities include the following:

8.1 The University

The University is responsible for:

- (i) providing an environment that is conducive to work and learning for all staff, students and visitors;
- (ii) providing a healthy and safe learning and working environment for all staff, students and visitors in line with legislative requirements and the ACU Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy; and
- (iii) taking reasonable steps to assist students, staff and visitors who may have special needs to access facilities and services.

8.2 Members of the Executive

Members of the Executive are responsible for effectively communicating the provisions of this Procedure in the area under their management by ensuring that:

- (i) the Procedure is well publicised and implemented within all work areas under their management (e.g. notices are displayed in laboratories, workshops and clinics where children are not normally allowed, and/or are unsafe and/or restricted areas); and
- (ii) supervisory and other staff who report to them are aware of this Procedure, and are able to implement it fairly and reasonably.

8.3 Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for:

- (i) ensuring the Procedure is explained in the 1-on-1 induction of new staff and demonstrating to each new staff member where to access this Procedure;
- (ii) assessing potential risks related to requests made by staff to ensure that children are not allowed into any unsafe and/or restricted areas except, for example and as appropriate to the area, to access professional services as a client; or attend organised and supervised public displays or other activity;
- (iii) providing approval for children of staff to attend in specific situations, and, where such approval is provided, sharing responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of the child or children;

- (iv) ensuring that the Procedure is implemented fairly and reasonably by the staff they supervise; and
- (v) providing guidance to the staff they supervise on implementing the Procedure.

8.4 Teaching staff

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- (i) assessing potential risks related to requests made by students to ensure that children are not allowed into any unsafe and/or restricted areas except, for example and as appropriate to the area, to access professional services as a client; or attend organised and supervised public displays or other activity; and
- (ii) providing approval for children of students to attend in specific situations, and, where such approval is provided, sharing responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of the child or children.

8.5 Carers

Carers wishing to bring children into the University learning environment or their personal work environment are responsible for:

- (i) assessing any options available for alternative child care arrangements before approaching their supervisor or the relevant teaching staff member;
- (ii) obtaining approval for bringing a child or children into a University learning environment or their personal work environment. The expectation is that such approval will be obtained in advance. On the rare occasions when this is not possible, the person wishing to make the request should:
 - leave a message for the supervisor/teaching staff member;
 - advise another supervisor in the unit if one is available (should the supervisor be unavailable); or
 - contact the supervisor/teaching staff member as soon as possible after arrival on campus.
- (iii) taking reasonable steps, while on campus, to safeguard the health and safety of the child or children in their care;
- (iv) considering the potential risk to the health and safety of others that may be associated with bringing children into the University learning or work environment, and taking reasonable steps to safeguard against risks including ensuring that the child or children are not suffering from a contagious illness;
- (v) ensuring that any child or children in their care do not inconvenience or endanger staff, students or visitors in the course of their work or learning; and
- (vi) ensuring that the child or children are adequately supervised by them at all times.

9 Policy review

The University may make changes to this procedure from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this procedure may forward their suggestions to Human Resources.

10 Further assistance

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this policy should first consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further information or advice be required staff should visit [Service Central](#).

11 Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Local Protocols

Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures
Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Equal Opportunity Policy
Breastfeeding Policy
Statement on Work-and-Life Balance