

Children on Campus Policy

Designated Officer:	Vice-Chancellor
Council Approval:	Council 99/51, 08.06.99
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Related Policies:	Equal Opportunity Policy Discrimination and Harassment Policy Code of Conduct Workplace Health & Safety Policy Enterprise Bargaining Agreement Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy

Overview

The University is committed to equal opportunity for all staff and students and the provision of a campus and other facilities which are safe and appropriately accessible for all. This policy seeks to strike a balance between the University's operational requirements and considerations of equal opportunity and health and safety issues. To this end, due care must be taken by all individuals bringing children onto campus, to ensure their safety and the minimal disruption of University activities.

Policy

1. Definitions

A '**Child**' is a person under the age of 18 years. The provisions of this policy as they relate to a child or children do not apply to a person or persons enrolled as a student at the University of the Sunshine Coast even if they are under the age of 18 years.

2. Children of students and staff on campus

2.1 The University recognises that there will be times when it is appropriate for children to accompany staff and students on campus. However, the University must also conduct its operations in an efficient and effective manner and the provisions for children on campus must take proper account of the University's operational requirements. As such, the University may need to limit this access based on the following considerations:

- safety of the child in the relevant environment,
- level of interference with other staff, students or visitors,
- sickness and level of contagion of the child,
- frequency and duration of attendance,
- content of lecture, discussion or activity (eg sensitive or explicit subject matter may be inappropriate),
- size of venue and availability of seating,
- other staff and students not being interrupted, inconvenienced or disrupted,
- continued reasonable behaviour by the child,
- notification to the supervisor or lecturer/tutor.

In continuing situations, permission from a staff member's or student's supervisor or lecturer/tutor will be sought and permission remains at the discretion of the supervisor or lecturer/tutor. All requests will be considered sensitively and reasonably, with regard to the above considerations.

- 2.2 If a supervisor or lecturer/tutor believes that the presence of a child may cause an unacceptable risk or is unreasonable, they may request that the child be taken away from the area by the parent or guardian.

3. Children attending campus in authorised groups

Children regularly visit the campus in school and other groups, which are authorised in advance as appropriate. Such groups are a welcome part of campus life. While on campus, children in authorised groups are the responsibility of the parent (s) and/or nominated guardian(s) or caregiver(s) accompanying them.

4. Unaccompanied children on campus

Visitors to the campus, including children, are welcome. Like other community members, children may access the University's campus and select facilities. Children 12 years of age and under may have to be accompanied by an adult. The University assumes no responsibility for the supervision of unaccompanied children on campus. Unaccompanied children, where they create a disturbance or pose a risk, may be directed from the campus. In such instances, the Vice-Chancellor or delegate will act in accordance with appropriate Acts, Statutes, policies and procedures. In public areas such as the Library any member of staff on duty has the authority to direct that children be removed from the area.

5. Workplace Health and Safety

The University recognises its statutory and common law responsibilities for protecting non-employees, including children, from exposure to risks to their health and safety arising from University activities. Accordingly, children will not normally be allowed in areas that have identifiable hazards including, for example:

- Science laboratories,
- Trade workshops,
- Construction sites or areas undergoing minor works/maintenance,
- Machinery areas and areas where grounds equipment is in use,
- Art studios, computer laboratories, and areas displaying inappropriate or graphic material,
- Chemical and dangerous goods storage areas,
- Clinical areas,
- Kitchens,
- Storage facilities.

In special circumstances children may be granted permission to enter hazardous areas, for example during Open Day activities, as part of a school visit or work experience program and in the course of employment (eg Events and Catering assistants). Such permission will only be granted with the full knowledge and consideration of appropriate supervisory measures.

University staff may refuse permission to access any area within the University because of reasonable concerns related to workplace health and safety issues.

Parents and caregivers must recognise that some environments and facilities which are safe in terms of the relevant health and safety legislation may represent risks for small children (eg stairs, self-closing doors, electrical fittings, office equipment). The major and primary responsibility of care remains properly with parents and caregivers.

6. Infections and Diseases

Many childhood diseases are extremely contagious and could create serious health risks to students and staff. Parents and guardians have a responsibility not to expose the University community to health risks by bringing a child known to have an infectious disease onto campus. They must also ensure that their children do not engage in activities that may pose a threat to the health, safety and well being of others.

7. Responsibilities

Parents and guardians maintain ultimate responsibility for the safety of children in their care and must ensure the safety of their children and supervise them at all times. The University does not accept liability.