

Guideline Title: Children at ECU Guideline

Guideline Owner: Chief Safety Officer

Keywords: Children, Workplace, Guardian, Premises

This guideline supports the University to operationalise the *Work Health and Safety Policy [PL139]* and must be complied with.

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1. Intent

The purpose of this guideline is to achieve the University's goal in providing and maintaining, so far as is Reasonably Practicable, a safe and healthy working and learning environment for its Workers, Students and Visitors.

The University understands that, although a range of childcare options are available to Workers and Students throughout the wider community, there are circumstances where a Guardian may need to bring Children onto the University's premises.

This guideline has been developed to inform Workers and Students of their responsibilities and the University's expectations when Children are brought onto University premises.

2. Organisational Scope

This guideline applies to all ECU Workers, Students and Visitors.

3. Definitions

The [University Glossary](#), the [WHS Definitions Register](#) and the following definitions apply to this guideline:

| Term | Definition |
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| Children / Child | As defined in the Edith Cowan University Lands and Traffic By-Laws, Children are considered a person under 15 years of age |
| Guardian | The person over 15 years of age (Worker, student or Visitor) who brings the Child onto the campus. |
| Laboratory | A place of specialised work such as research, clinical or diagnostic evaluation teaching and/or learning including all areas using hazardous substances (chemicals). |
| Manager/ Supervisor | A person with line management responsibility for any employee including all full-time, part-time and casual staff. A person responsible for controlling activities areas, Workers or Students. |
| Premises | All the University's campuses, field and research stations, buildings, grounds, vehicles, farms, commercial operations and other locations under the University's control. |
| Studio | An area involving dancing, music and or visual art activities. |
| Workshop | Areas involving the use and maintenance of electrical and mechanical machinery and tools. |

4. Guideline Content

General

- 4.1 The University commits to promoting equity for all Workers and Students and ensuring, so far as is Reasonably Practicable, that individuals are not disadvantaged in their academic and career aspirations by actual or perceived family responsibilities.
- 4.2 ECU provides childcare services to assist Workers and Students with balancing study, work and family life. These services include long daycare at childcare centres on ECU campuses and occasional care (crèche) for up to four hours at the

Joondalup ECU Sports Centre. For further information please view the [Digital and Campus Services website](#).

- 4.3 Children are welcome on campus to areas of public access and for approved University activities, such as Open Days, Academy performances, approved teaching/research programs, community playgroups and on guided tours.
- 4.4 Sick Children, particularly Children with known Infectious Diseases must not be brought into the Workplace/teaching area at any time.
- 4.5 Where a Guardian brings a Child to an ECU premise or Workplace, the Child shall be under the direct supervision of the Guardian at all times. The Guardian is responsible for all aspects of the Child's behaviour, safety and financial reimbursement for any damage sustained to University property.
- 4.6 Incidents involving Children in the workplace must be reported in Riskware and investigated as per the ECU [Incident Reporting and Investigation Guideline](#).

Restricted Areas and Activities

- 4.7 The following areas are intrinsically hazardous and/or have the potential to lead to damage to equipment and, as such, Children shall not be admitted to:
 - a. Areas licensed to sell alcohol, unless accompanied by an adult, and the Child is not sold or given alcohol;
 - b. All laboratories (excluding computer e-labs), kitchens, workshops, music/visual arts studios or similar unless during an approved University teaching, research or community program;
 - c. Activities presenting elevated and/or Critical Risks including, but not limited to, those requiring Permit to Work and/ or a high-risk work licence, activities involving high risk hazardous substances, radiation, low temperature environments, operating, modifying or maintaining machinery and tools, as well as activities with potential for drowning and/or asphyxiation. For information on activities presenting Critical Risks, refer to the ECU [Work Health and Safety Critical Risks and Controls Standard](#);
 - d. Other locations and activities deemed unsuitable by the Person in Control of the Workplace or activity following Risk Assessment. For additional guidance on the Risk Management process to eliminate or reduce risks to Children in the workplace, refer to the [WorkSafe Bulletin – Children at the workplace](#).

Working/Teaching Area

Making a request

- 4.8 Workers and Students who wish to bring Children into the Workplace/Teaching area must request permission from their Line Manager/Supervisor in writing and in advance of the attendance.

Approval process

- 4.9 When considering a Guardian's request to bring a Child into the Workplace or Teaching area, the line Manager/Supervisor should consider both the Guardian's needs and the needs of others. Factors to consider may include:
- a. the age of the Child;
 - b. the length of time involved;
 - c. the frequency of attendance;
 - d. the subject matter being taught (i.e. may be upsetting for Children and/or restricting for students and workers) and activities to be performed;
 - e. the environment, safety and health issues; and
 - f. the degree of interference (potential or actual) with others
- 4.10 Approval or otherwise for a Child to attend a Workplace/Teaching area should be documented in writing.
- 4.11 Workers and Students must ensure that others are not inconvenienced by the Children's presence. In the event of a Child becoming disruptive, the Guardian has a responsibility to remove the Child from the Workplace/teaching area.

Field Trips/Events

Making a request

- 4.12 Workers and Students who wish to bring Children to Field Trips/Approved work events must request permission from the Executive Dean/Director in writing and in advance of the Field trip/event.

Approval process

- 4.13 Approval for a Child's attendance at a Field Trip or event can only be made by the Executive Dean/Director and should take into account guidance and recommendation of the Line Manager/Supervisor.

- 4.14 When considering a Guardian's request to bring a Child on a Field Trip or event, the Executive Dean/Director should consider the following:
- Both the Guardian's needs and the needs of others;
 - The Risk Assessment for the Field Trip or event has considered the impact from the presence of Children, any associated hazards and additional control measures required;
 - For additional guidance on Risk Management process to eliminate or reduce risks to Children in the workplace, refer to [WorkSafe Bulletin – Children at the workplace](#).
 - Additional factors including those previously referenced at 4.7, as well as:
 - the location and travel/accommodation arrangements;
 - the impact on the student or staff member's ability to fully participate in the Field Trip/event whilst supervising the Child.
- 4.15 Executive Deans/Deans/Directors are to document in writing their approval or otherwise for a Child to attend a Field Trip/Event.
- 4.16 Workers and Students must ensure that others are not inconvenienced by the Children's presence. In the event of a Child becoming disruptive, the Guardian has a responsibility to remove the Child from the Field Trip/Event.

5. Accountabilities and Responsibilities

The Guideline Owner is the Chief Safety Officer and has overall responsibility for the content of these guidelines and their operation.

The WHS and Wellbeing team are responsible for currency of information and provision of advice relating to these guidelines.

6. Related Documents

By-Laws, Statutes and Rules

- [Edith Cowan University Lands and Traffic By-Laws](#)

Policies

- [University Work Health and Safety Policy](#) [PL139]

Operational Documents and resources

- [Long day care services by ECU](#)
- [ECU Creche](#)
- [WorkSafe Bulletin – Children at the workplace](#)
- [ECU Incident Reporting and Investigation Guideline](#)
- [ECU Work Health and Safety Critical Risks and Controls Standard](#)

7. Contact Information

For queries relating to this Document please contact:

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| Guideline Owner | Chief Safety Officer |
| All Enquiries Contact | Work Health Safety and Wellbeing Team |
| Telephone | 08 6304 2302 |
| Email address | whs@ecu.edu.au |

8. Approval History

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| Guideline approved by | Chief Safety Officer |
| Date guideline first approved | September 2020 |
| Date last modified | May 2025 |
| Revision history | September 2020: A new guideline was developed to replace previous Children in the Workplace Policy HR096. May 2025: The guideline was updated with new position titles and contact information following an organisational restructure, inclusion of the Critical Risks and Controls |

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| | standard and reference to DEMIRS' Children at Workplace Checklist. |
| Next revision due | May 2028 |
| HPCM file reference | HSMS/51 |