

# Working with Children Policy and Procedure (Students under 18 years)



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| Legislation   | Child Protection and Education Legislation (Reporting of Abuse) Amendment Bill 2017 |
| DESBT         | SKW Clearance Checks  |
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## Policy

This policy is to ensure our organisation is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who use our services. Our staff will always treat young people with respect and understanding. To ensure children and young people are kept safe from harm, the Work Skills Policy states that:

- All new staff are to undergo to a diligent screening process, prior to their employment.
- All new staff members must participate in an induction program
- All staff who are required to work with persons under the age of 18 are required to hold and maintain a Blue Card at their own expense.
- For more information see our policies for Code of Conduct, Recruitment policy and induction program. All existing staff members are kept up to date by way of staff meetings and email.

Our company has a duty of care to report any incidents of harm or any suspicion of harm. The object of this policy is to inform our staff members, the employers of students, the parents of students, the student and any other stakeholder relevant to the student, our underlying principles, which are:

- That the welfare and best interests of a child are paramount.
- Every child is a valued member of society.
- In any decisions involving a child, the child's views and wishes will be considered in a way that has regard to the child's age and ability to understand.
- Every child is entitled to be treated in a way that respects the child's dignity and privacy.
- Every child is to be trained and supervised in a way that protects the child from harm and promotes the child's wellbeing.
- Every child has the right to express their concerns and complaints and to have them dealt with in a way that is fair and timely and promotes the child's participation in the process.

- To be able to receive information and help to enable the child to exercise the child's entitlements.

Every parent or legal guardian has the right to be kept informed of all training issues or incidents affecting the child's safety or well being. Work Skills welcomes all communication and will always endeavor to solve any problem.

We implement and maintain this policy and procedure by way of eight main points, which are:

1. Staff Recruitment and Blue Card
2. Staff Training
3. Code of Conduct
4. Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
5. Access and Equity Policy and Procedure
6. Continuous improvement Policy and Procedure
7. Communication with stakeholders and children
8. Recording and reporting

These procedures are reviewed and monitored through our audit process.

## Procedure

### **1. Staff Recruitment and Blue Card**

All applicants applying for positions requiring work with person under the age of 18 are subjected to a strict screening process. All applicants must submit their resume with a minimum of three recent referees. Work Skills will then contact these referees and verify the applicant suitability to our company. Work Skills maintain a current register of all staff holding Blue Cards.

### **2. Staff Training**

All new staff must participate and successfully complete an induction program (refer to Staff Recruitment and Induction Procedure). After the completion of the induction program, the new staff member is placed on six months' probation and will start to participate in their daily duties with other members of staff to mentor them.

### **3. Code of Conduct**

Our company Code of Conduct ensures that all staff members are fully aware of their obligation on how they are to interact with our clients, students, parents or legal guardians, with other staff members and our stakeholders.

### **4. Ethical Conduct**

All Work Skills staff members are trained and expected to follow company policy when faced with ethical dilemmas, that aren't covered in the Work Skills code of conduct. (Refer to the Company Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure)

#### **5. Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy and Procedures, Access and Equity**

We use these policies and procedures for dealing with all our internal and external complaints. It allows all parties involved written information and time lines as well as written outcomes. (Refer to Work Skills Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy and Procedures)

#### **6. Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure**

We use this policy and procedure to improve our systems, policies and procedures. (Refer to Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure)

#### **7. Communication with Stakeholders and Children**

All our clients, students, parents, guardians, stakeholders and potential future clientele will be able to view this policy and procedure and will be well informed of our company's commitment to child safety.

<https://workskills.com.au/resources-information/>

#### **8. Recording and Reporting**

All Work Skills staff members have a Duty of Care to report any incidents or suspicion of harm to children, Work Skills does this by way of our incident report form. If any of our staff are informed or have a suspicion of harm to any of our students which are under the age of 18 years of age, they will complete an incident report form and hand to the Directors of the Work Skills.

All Work Skills staff will make themselves available for further investigations by Queensland Police and or The Department of Child Safety.

If Work Skills staff is reported as having committed or suspicion of harm, an incident report will be completed, and the Directors will notify Queensland Police.

(Refer to our Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy and Procedure and Discrimination and Harrassment Policy and Procedure)

The following table provides some possible courses of action Work Skills may take, depending on where the alleged harm originated.

| Source of Harm | Possible Action  |   |  |
|----------------|--|---|--|
|                | Immediate  | Short to medium term  | Long Term  |
| Staff          | Contact the Queensland Police Department or The Department of Child Safety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* support all parties, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the person making the disclosure</li> <li>- the person receiving the disclosure</li> <li>- the child or young person who has been harmed, and</li> <li>- the alleged perpetrator</li> </ul> </li> <li>* suspend the alleged perpetrator from duties until the matter is resolved</li> <li>* have the alleged perpetrator undertake alternative duties if available</li> </ul>   | <p>If allegation is proven:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* terminate employment</li> </ul> <p>If allegation is not proven:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* activate complaints procedure</li> </ul>   |
| Clients        |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* support all parties, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the person making the disclosure</li> <li>- the person receiving the disclosure</li> <li>- the child or young person who has been harmed, and</li> <li>- the alleged perpetrator</li> </ul> </li> <li>* determine whether the client, as an alleged perpetrator, is allowed:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- any contact with the child or young person</li> <li>- to participate in any activities</li> <li>- to be in any areas where children or young people are</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>While the matter is being investigated by the Queensland Police Department or Department of Child Safety.</p> | <p>If allegation is proven:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* determine if the client involvement with the child or young person can continue.</li> </ul> <p>If allegation is not proven:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* activate complaints procedure</li> </ul> |
| External       |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* allow the Queensland Police Department or the Department of Child Safety to undertake an official investigation</li> <li>* support the person who made the disclosure, the person who received the disclosure and the child or young person who has been harmed</li> </ul>   |  |

**Any action will be undertaken in consultation with independent legal advice and in accordance with Work Skills Policies and Procedures.**

This policy and procedure is associated with the following documents:

- Recruitment Induction Policy and Procedure
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Incident Report Form
- Discrimination and Harrassment Policy and Procedure