

Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to these procedures and are critical to its effectiveness:

Act refers to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld).

Blue Card refers to a card which is issued in Queensland to a person who is the holder of a current "positive notice", following a Working with Children assessment of a person's eligibility to work with children based on their known past police and disciplinary information.

Blue Card Services is a section within the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General that undertakes Working with Children checks and issues Blue Cards.

Child/Children refers to any person under the age of 18 years (while recognising that young people under the age of 18 years may be independent and capable individuals.)

Regulated employment are categories of employment regulated by the Act.

Volunteer is a member of the USC community who provides their services in a voluntary capacity to the University, not for financial reward but who may receive reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses. Volunteers are not staff of the University.

Vulnerable person is an individual aged 18 years and above who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

Yellow card refers to card which is issued in Queensland to a person who has undergone a criminal history screening for eligibility to work with a Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors funded non-government service provider or a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) non-government service provider.

Workplace integrated learning (WIL) placement course is any course undertaken within a program of university study to gain experience in a workplace setting, also known variously as Supervised Professional Experience (SPE), internship, practicum, workplace learning (WPL), clinical placement or Work Experience Scheme (WES).

1. Purpose of procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to provide guidance to the USC community regarding:

- promotion of the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons, and the protection of children and vulnerable persons from harm
- recruiting, selecting, training and managing persons engaged or proposed to be engaged by the University in child-related employment
- handling disclosures or suspicions of harm
- implementing and reviewing the risk management strategy; and managing breaches of the risk management strategy
- keeping a written record of matters under the Act, chapter 8 about each person engaged by the University in child-related work.

2. Regulated employment

2.1 The following University activities are regulated employment under the Act:

(a) a health service – which is a service for maintaining, improving, restoring or caring for a person's health or wellbeing – is regulated if:

- by its nature, requires physical contact with the child; or
- where the employee maybe physically present with the child while no-one else is present.

USC offers a range of clinics which are open to the public and provide professional services to our wider community.

(b) a counselling service – which is a service that provides or purports to provide, on a professional basis, help or guidance to persons to resolve personal, social or emotional problems or difficulties – is regulated if:

- the employee is physically present with the child while no-one else is present;
- or if the employee is not physically present with the child, for example, an internet or telephone help line service.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Vice-Chancellor and President

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Vice-Chancellor and President

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

FIRST APPROVED

26 October 2018

LAST AMENDED

30 August 2019

EFFECTIVE START DATE

30 August 2019

REVIEW DATE

28 October 2023

STATUS

Active

USC's Student Wellbeing offers counselling and SafeUSC services for students, who may be under the age of 18 or may be considered to be vulnerable persons.

(c) a support service – which is a service that provides emotional support, mentoring or pastoral care, but does not include a legal advice or legal advocacy service – is regulated if:

- the employee is physically present with the child while no-one else is present;
- or if the employee is not physically present with the child, for example, an internet or telephone help line service.

USC's Student Wellbeing offers counselling and support through the complaints process for students, who may be under the age of 18 or may be vulnerable persons.

AccessAbility Services provides students with a disability, and those who are a primary carer for someone with a disability, access to reasonable academic adjustments. Services are also provided to prospective students.

(d) sport and active recreation – which is regulated if:

- the services provided are directed mainly towards children; or
- the activities conducted mainly involve children.

USC Sport offers a range of activities for the general public, which may include children.

(e) schools—employees other than teachers and parents— which is regulated if:

- the services provided at a school are directed mainly towards children; or
- the activities conducted at a school mainly involve children.

USC may undertake various marketing or extra-curricular learning activities at primary and secondary schools and may have programs, including indigenous outreach programs that involve children.

2.2 The Act (Schedule 1) sets out other types of regulated employment, including primary and secondary schools and child care services, in which students of the University may be employed as 'trainee students' through participation in a workplace integrated learning (WIL) placement courses. Further details are provided in section 6.

3. Recruitment and appointment of employees

Work areas will identify via Human Resources positions designated as regulated employment (as set out in section 2) which meet the minimum time threshold to require a Blue Card and will ensure that the role statement includes it as a requirement, as appropriate. New employees appointed to these designated positions must be in possession of a Blue Card prior to commencing employment.

4. Monitoring staff in regulated employment

4.1 Staff must submit their application for a Blue Card to a nominated blue card delegate in the Blue Card Services team. Lodgement appointment can be booked by emailing staffbluecard@usc.edu.au. The University will lodge the application on behalf of the staff member and will make payment of the application fee.

4.2 The Blue Card Services team are responsible for managing the Blue Card compliance requirements for staff, with oversight by the Senior Manager Technical Operations. Blue card notifications will be managed in USC ECM.

4.3 Staff whose application for a Blue Card is rejected (negative notice) or whose Blue Card is revoked must immediately inform their supervisor and advise the Blue Card Service team. The supervisor must work with HR to review the work tasks and activities of the staff member to ensure that USC is compliant with all legislative requirements.

4.4 USC staff, volunteers are responsible for monitoring expiry dates closely. Renewal applications must be lodged to enable staff to continue working whilst the application is processed.

5. Monitoring volunteers in regulated employment

5.1 Volunteers, unless otherwise exempt under the Act, must be in possession of a Blue Card prior to commencing their work with the University in regulated employment. The University will lodge the application on behalf of the volunteer. A volunteer who already has a Blue Card for other reasons (for example, as a coach of a children's sporting team) can apply to link an existing Blue Card to the University.

5.2 Each relevant organisational unit is responsible for managing their own Blue Card compliance requirements for volunteers, with oversight by the Executive Officer of that area. Each organisational unit is required to maintain a Blue Card register for volunteers.

5.3 Volunteers whose application for a Blue Card is rejected (negative notice) or whose Blue Card is revoked must immediately inform their supervisor and cannot undertake work involving children. The supervisor must review the work tasks and activities of the volunteer to ensure that USC is compliant with all legislative requirements.

5.4 USC volunteers are responsible for monitoring expiry dates closely. Renewal applications must be lodged 30 days before expiry to enable volunteers to continue working whilst the application is processed. If a Blue Card expires, the Volunteer will be unable to continue in child-related employment, until such time as their renewal application has been processed.

6. Monitoring students in regulated employment

6.1 Students undertaking a workplace integrated learning (WIL) placement course which may involve working with children, must be in possession of a Blue Card prior to commencing their WIL placement course. Depending upon the mandatory program requirements, and the jurisdiction where the placement is located, students may require other types of criminal history checks which may be in place to safeguard vulnerable people, such as a Yellow Card for certain health and/or disability support services.

6.2 WIL placements are managed by the various Schools/Disciplines through the SONIA system, and students are required to lodge evidence of meeting all of their program's mandatory requirements through this system, including having a current Blue Card. Refer also to the Workplace and Industry Placement – Procedures.

6.3 Students whose application for a Blue Card is rejected (negative notice) or whose Blue Card is revoked must immediately inform their course placement coordinator and cannot undertake work involving children. If a student receives a negative notice or has their approval revoked, the course placement coordinator will advise the student how this will affect their ongoing studies.

6.4 USC students are responsible for monitoring expiry dates closely. Renewal applications must be lodged 30 days before expiry. If a Blue Card expires, the student will be unable to continue in child-related placement, until such time as their renewal application has been processed.

7. Reporting and Recordkeeping

7.1 Compliance with the Act will be reported on annually as part of the University's Compliance Management Framework.

7.2 Blue Card registers for staff and volunteers should record the currency of each staff member or volunteer's Blue Card or exemption, including an expiry date.

7.3 All records must be captured by all staff, at every stage of this activity and should provide reliable and accurate evidence of business decisions and actions. All records must be captured in an approved records management system, in accordance with the University's Information and Records Management – Procedures.

7.4 In the case of students, born-digital records regarding WIL placement courses are captured and managed in the SONIA system. Physical records, such as the confirmation letter USC receives back from Blue Card Services, need to be retained. These should be attached to SONIA, then batched, and sent to Information Management Services for processing and storage.

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Acceptable Use of ICT Resources - Governing Policy
Acceptable Use of ICT Resources - Procedures
Anti-Discrimination and Freedom from Bullying and Harassment (Staff) - Governing Policy
Anti-Discrimination and Freedom from Bullying and Harassment (Students) - Governing Policy
Children on Campus - Operational Policy
Conduct on University Premises - Operational Policy
Health, Safety and Wellbeing - Governing Policy
Information Management Framework - Governing Policy
Performance Management - Operational Policy
Recruitment, Selection and Appointment - Operational Policy
Sexual Harassment Prevention (Students) - Governing Policy
Social Media - Operational Policy
Staff Code of Conduct - Governing Policy
Student Conduct - Governing Policy
Student Grievance Resolution - Governing Policy
Working with Vulnerable People - Governing Policy
Workplace and Industry Placement - Procedures

LINKED DOCUMENTS

[Working with Vulnerable People - Governing Policy](#)

RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)
Disability Standards for Education 2005
Child Protection Act 1999
Disability Services Act 2006
Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000
Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011