

Child Safe Code of Conduct

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The RMIT Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines professional expectations, appropriate and inappropriate behaviours when interacting with children, and the consequences of misconduct.

- a. For the purposes of this Child Safe Code of Conduct, a child is any person under the age of 18. The terms 'child', 'young person', and 'younger person' all refer to individuals under the age of 18.

(2) RMIT University is committed to fostering the empowerment and engagement of children and young people. RMIT seeks, at all times, to create an environment that supports children and young people to participate in decisions that affect them and to have confidence that adults in the RMIT community will always act on their concerns. RMIT is committed to ensuring that young people are aware of their rights and provided with age-appropriate child safety information.

Section 2 - Overview

(3) The Child Safe Code is about how we work as a community to uphold our commitment to child safety.

(4) As a public University that conducts its business across the biik biik (lands) and wurneet (water ways) of the Eastern Kulin Nations, the Child Safe Code acknowledges our dhumbali (commitment) to place, explained in the [Bundjil Statement](#).

(5) RMIT is a values-based organisation, and all members of the RMIT community are expected to practice our core values. Our core values inspire us and help us to make RMIT a positive force for social, cultural and environmental change, and guide how we live and work together, wherever we are in the world.

(6) The Child Safe Code is maintained as an information resource for RMIT Group staff, contractors, volunteers, students and the public.

Section 3 - Scope

(7) All staff, students, contractors, and volunteers across all campuses in all regions are required to comply with the Child Safe Code of Conduct, regardless of whether their role includes interaction with children. It also applies to students when completing a placement.

(8) Any breach of this Child Safe Code of Conduct must be reported to RMIT Safer Community.

Section 4 - Code of Conduct

Expected Behaviours

(9) It is the responsibility of all RMIT staff and affiliates to uphold child safety and wellbeing by:

- a. adhering to all relevant Australian and Victorian legislation, RMIT University [Child Safe Policy](#), this Child Safe Code of Conduct, and other organisational policies
- b. conducting yourself in a manner consistent with RMIT values
- c. promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- d. establishing and maintaining a child safe environment in the course of your engagement with RMIT
- e. treating children, young people and their families with respect, fairness and courtesy
- f. actively promoting cultural safety, participation and inclusion to ensure all children and their families are welcomed by being inclusive
- g. upholding the principles of equity in working with children and young people
- h. treating all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, culture, property, disability, or other status
- i. providing Aboriginal children and young people with a safe, respectful, positive environment where they are empowered to express their culture and belief systems
- j. respecting and protecting the cultural rights of Aboriginal children and young people, ensuring that each child is supported in their identity
- k. promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTIQ+ children and young people and those who cannot live at home
- l. understanding and complying with reporting obligations
- m. raising concerns with the University if risks to child safety are identified in any activities, facilities, structures, procedures, or behaviour of others
- n. making a report if you believe or suspect a child is being harmed, is at risk of harm, or an allegation or disclosure has been made, taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- o. reporting and act on any behavioural complaints, concerns or observed breaches regarding this Child Safe Code of Conduct
- p. reporting any concern, allegation, disclosure, or observation of child abuse to the relevant person or authority as outlined in RMIT University's reporting procedure and in line with mandatory reporting requirements, including the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- q. respecting the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information regarding child protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with the relevant people to follow the reporting procedure
- r. listening to and valuing children and young people's ideas and opinions, ensuring they are listened to and responded to appropriately
- s. working with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work being done with a child/young person
- t. maintaining appropriate boundaries and ensuring a respectful and appropriate tone in all social media interactions, especially with a child/young person
- u. maintaining appropriate boundaries with a child/young person, including when seeing a child from RMIT outside the RMIT context
- v. avoid one-on-one situations with underage students unless it is necessary for your role or activity, and ensure transparency by informing others when such interactions occur
- w. ensuring any physical contact with a child/young person is appropriate to the delivery of in the context of learning and programs or activities, and based on the needs of children and young people (such as to assist or comfort a distressed child)
- x. only communicate with underage students through official RMIT channels (such as university email or approved platforms), and only when required for study or university-related activities. Personal or private contact—such as through social media, messaging apps, or gaming platforms—is not appropriate unless explicitly authorised and supervised

y. participating in child safety training.

(10) Expected behaviours in an online environment:

- a. only communicate with underage students through authorised RMIT channels, such as university email or approved RMIT social media accounts
- b. ensure any online interaction with an underage student is solely for educational or safety-related purposes and takes place on university-endorsed platforms (e.g. RMIT email systems, learning management systems)
- c. ensure all online class content and communications are age-appropriate and inclusive, particularly when under-18 students are present
- d. not exchange personal contact details (including phone numbers, personal email addresses, or social media handles) with underage students outside of approved learning or program requirements, or without appropriate oversight
- e. not engage in unauthorised contact with underage students via personal social media, email, messaging apps, or phone

(11) It is the responsibility of all RMIT students to uphold child safety and wellbeing by:

- a. treating all students with respect, fairness, and courtesy, regardless of background or identity
- b. adhering to RMIT's Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct, and relevant legislation at all times
- c. maintaining appropriate boundaries in all interactions with children and young people
- d. reporting any concerns or observations regarding the safety or wellbeing of an under-18 student to RMIT staff or through official reporting channels
- e. students undertaking Work Integrated Learning (WIL) placements that involve contact with children or young people must also adhere to the placement organisation's Code of Conduct at all times. This includes upholding child safe practices and professional boundaries, regardless of whether the young person appears to be under 18
- f. Take steps to prevent and protect children from any form of harassment, abuse or neglect—physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or cultural in online activity and conduct

(12) Unacceptable behaviours from all staff, students, contractors, and volunteers:

- a. engaging in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to cause harm, including participating in any behaviour that would constitute abuse, harm, neglect, exploitation, harassment, discrimination, or victimisation
- b. condoning or participating in behaviour with a child/young person that is illegal, unsafe, or abusive
- c. seeking to use a child/young person in any way to meet the needs of adults
- d. ignoring or disregarding any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse
- e. exaggerating or trivialising child abuse issues
- f. using hurtful, discriminatory, or offensive behaviour or language with a child/young person
- g. initiating unnecessary physical contact (including cuddling, physical restraint, or personal hygiene practices (such as patient care while on placement))
- h. engaging in sexual misconduct, which includes any sexual activity (touching, fondling, oral, anal, or vaginal penetration, voyeurism, exhibitionism), exploitation, inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature. Sexual misconduct can occur face to face or online
- i. engaging in any behaviours which could be seen as grooming. Grooming is the use of deliberate behaviours to build trust with a child or young person—and often their family or community—with the intent of facilitating abuse. It can include forming 'special' relationships, giving gifts or attention, encouraging secrecy, or blurring professional boundaries. Grooming may occur in person or online. discriminating on the basis of age, sex,

- gender identity, race, culture, or sexual orientation
- j. supply of alcohol or drugs to a child/young person
- k. using any device including computer, mobile phone, or video or digital camera to exploit or harass a child/young person
- l. offering to transport a child/young person alone in your car or inviting them to your home (except in cases of an organised car-pooling arrangement for transport for course related or club trips, with the consent of a parent or guardian)

(13) Overnight stays: Throughout their engagement with RMIT, enrolled students aged 16 or 17 years old may participate in camps and overnight trips either as part of their education or their membership of an RMIT club or society. Elements to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- a. parental/guardian approval must be obtained in writing prior to the trip
- b. supervision - if no RMIT staff member will be present, leaders of the group must be aware of their responsibilities regarding child safety and consider a 'buddy' support system where a trip leader and/or responsible adult helps to support the participation of a child/young person
- c. emergency contacts - ensure the trip leaders have the emergency contact of every child/young person and ensuring that the child/young person and trip organiser have the details for escalated support, such as Safer Community
- d. sleeping arrangements - consider if the arrangements will be safe and appropriate for a child/young person, such as age and gender
- e. consumption of alcohol - ensure the young person is aware that they are not allowed to consume alcohol on the trip and ensure the trip leaders of aware of this

Compliance

(14) If a member of the RMIT community breaches the RMIT Child Safe Code of Conduct, they will face an internal and/or external investigation which may result in any of the disciplinary action listed below. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:

- a. additional training and support
- b. verbal warning
- c. formal written warning
- d. report to police/Sexual Offences and Child-abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT)/Reportable Conduct Scheme
- e. stood down with pay
- f. stood down without pay
- g. termination of employment/engagement.

(15) Alleged or actual breaches of the Code will be handled in accordance with the applicable RMIT policy or procedure, enterprise agreement, applicable country law, industrial instrument, or contract. Where an alleged breach is not covered by an RMIT policy document, enterprise agreement, industrial instrument, or contract, RMIT will apply the principles of natural justice when investigating such a complaint.

(16) In serious cases staff may have their employment and/or affiliation terminated where an allegation is proven.

Review

(17) This policy will be reviewed at least once every five (5) years in accordance with the [Policy Governance Policy](#).

Understanding and Acceptance

(18) RMIT University requires all staff to read and acknowledge this Child Safe Code of Conduct prior to commencement of employment.

(19) All contractors, students and volunteers must read and acknowledge this Child Safe Code of Conduct as part of their onboarding compliance with the University.

(20) All RMIT staff must complete the mandatory e-learning compliance module - Child Safety at RMIT. This module is completed at the beginning of employment and then every two years thereafter.

Section 5 - Related Procedures and Resources

- a. [Child Safe Policy](#)
- b. [Child Safe Reporting Procedure](#)
- c. [Child Safe Reporting Procedure \(Vietnam\)](#)
- d. Child Safe Statement of Commitment
- e. [Child Safe Reporting Instructions](#)
- f. [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- g. [Children on Campus and At Work Guideline](#)
- h. [Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Policy](#)

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	26th November 2025
Review Date	26th November 2030
Approval Authority	Manager, Central Policy
Approval Date	26th November 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Policy Owner	Fiona Notley Chief Operating Officer
Policy Author	Shah Abdul-Rahman Executive Director, Health, Safety and Risk
Enquiries Contact	Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"RMIT Group" - RMIT University and its controlled entities (RMIT Europe, RMIT Online, RMIT Vietnam, RMIT University Pathways)