

Children on Campus and at Work Guideline

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This guideline informs management, staff, students and contractors of their rights and responsibilities regarding bringing their children onto RMIT property in exceptional circumstances.

(2) The arrangements outlined in the document are not intended to provide a regular alternative to on-going child care.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This guideline applies to all staff, students, visitors and contractors on RMIT property.

Section 3 - Authority

(4) Authority for this document is established by the [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#).

Section 4 - Guideline

Overview

(5) RMIT recognises that situations, such as unforeseen childcare changes or childcare difficulties, may require staff and students to bring children onto RMIT property.

(6) However, when children are introduced to environments that are not designed to cater for them e.g. labs, certain research and teaching spaces, issues of safety, supervision, productivity and liability arise.

(7) For staff, RMIT provides a flexible working environment, which includes carer's leave amongst other forms of leave, which can be utilised to care for a child. Students should refer to RMIT policy on special consideration in cases where family or caregiver responsibilities impinge on academic requirements. RMIT also has childcare facilities located in the City and in Bundoora.

(8) For the purposes of this guideline, a caregiver is defined as: a person (employee, student, contractor or visitor) who has been provided authorisation to bring child(ren) to an RMIT place of work, teaching or fieldwork activity.

(9) The guidance provided in this document has been developed to protect the interests of children, staff, students and RMIT.

Guidance

(10) A staff member wishing to bring a child to their place of work for a period of more than one hour must first seek permission from their direct line manager.

(11) A student wishing to bring a child to a lecture, tutorial or other class must first seek permission from the relevant teacher/lecturer. The supervisor should treat requests flexibly and sensitively.

(12) Factors to be considered by a caregiver and their supervisor when considering bringing children onto RMIT property include:

- a. the age of the child(ren) and their vaccination status
- b. the nature and location of the class/workplace
- c. the activities being conducted in the space where the child(ren) might be located
- d. the degree of possible interference and disruption to other staff/students
- e. occupational health and safety issues e.g. labs or areas with machinery
- f. emergency management e.g. when lifts are not available in an evacuation
- g. other responsibilities of the caregiver i.e. warden, first aider.

(13) Where children are brought onto RMIT property or to any approved fieldwork activity, they must be supervised (direct line of sight) by the caregiver at all times. The responsibility for the child(ren) rests solely with the caregiver, and other staff or students must not be asked to look after the child(ren).

(14) RMIT has a general duty to protect persons from unreasonable risk or harm, which may be a result of 'lack of control of the conduct of others'. Supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that staff and students (caregiver) who bring children to class or work are aware of the issues involved, including that:

- a. The caregiver will ensure that children will not enter into hazardous areas such as laboratories, workshops, construction sites or plant rooms at any time or under any circumstance.
- b. The caregiver must ensure direct supervision of the child when on RMIT property at all times; direct line of sight. Responsibility for all aspects of the child's behaviour rests solely with the caregiver and responsibility for any damage caused by a child rests with caregiver.
- c. The caregiver must not bring a child onto RMIT property where the child has a significant communicable medical condition, for example, chickenpox, head lice or conjunctivitis. The caregiver should investigate their leave, flexible working or learning arrangements or special consideration options in these circumstances.
- d. The needs of other staff/students/contractors should be recognised and addressed when bringing children into the classroom or workplace.

(15) Where a risk or issue is identified, or the supervisor has reason to believe that the child is not being appropriately supervised, and/or a child's behaviour is disruptive to other staff or students, the supervisor has the right to request that the caregiver remove the child from the work or study area.

(16) Permission to bring children on RMIT property can be revoked by the supervisor with immediate effect, if supervision requirements, mitigation of risk, or due consideration for others' ability to work or study are not met

(17) Caregivers who need a private space for breastfeeding, expressing milk or changing nappies, or any other reason requiring privacy, can have access to reasonably accessible facilities for this purpose on RMIT property.

Section 5 - Definitions

Child(ren)	Any person under the age of 16 years who is not a staff member or student.
Caregiver	A person (employee, student, contractor or visitor) who has been provided authorisation to bring child(ren) to an RMIT place of work, teaching or fieldwork activity

Supervisor	RMIT Leader who is directly responsible for a place of work, teaching and/or study, or fieldwork activity including line managers, lecturers, teachers, activity coordinators.
Fieldwork activity	Any activity under the control RMIT, but outside of RMIT property. Students on “practicum” (or other workplace-based training) will be subject to the rules of those workplaces.

Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Emma Blee Director, Health Safety and Wellbeing
Policy Author	Emma Blee Director, Health Safety and Wellbeing
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