THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
INSTITUTE OF CONTINUING AND TESOL EDUCATION (UQ-ICTE)
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Reference:	UQ International Development
Title:	Child Protection Policy and Procedure
Custodian:	Deputy Director, International Development
Reviewer:	Senior Development Coordinator
Date Approved:	21/02/2018
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Audience:	All UQ International Development Staff All Volunteers, Consultants, Sub-contractors and Associate Firms
Associated Policies:	Child Protection Policy ACFID Guidelines
Version:	2.0

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to:

- Provide a management strategy to prevent child abuse and protect children in the course of our work;

- Protect our staff, volunteers, consultants, sub-contractors and other stakeholders from unfair practices and processes; and

- Provide our staff, volunteers, consultants, sub-contractors and other stakeholders with clear guidelines on what to do in the case of suspected child abuse.

POLICY

UQ International Development supports the rights of children and is committed to their safety and well-being.

UQ International Development staff, consultants and associated firms share a common responsibility and commitment to the awareness, prevention and reporting of and responding to child abuse in the course of their work.

UQ International Development's Child Protection Policy sets out our common values, principles, and beliefs and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children. It applies particularly to how we protect children from abuse within our own organisation as well as via the consultants and partner organisations with which we work closely. It is developed in the context of the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Child Protection Policy.

DFAT's Child Protection Policy applies to all DFAT funded partners that receive funding; including contractors and civil society organisations funded by DFAT including individual contractors, partners or organisations subcontracted by DFAT funded contractors or civil society organisations, personnel of DFAT-funded contractors and civil society organisations, Australian Volunteers for International Development Program participants and partners.

UQ International Development expects that each of its associates, subcontractors and staff members will read, understand and comply with UQ International Development Child Protection Policy as well as DFAT's Child Protection Policy (refer to the cover page for a link to the policy).

PROCEDURE

1.   Definitions

	Definition
Child	In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 'child' means: "every human being under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier." In line with the Australian Government Aid Program's Child Protection Policy, UQ International Development considers a child to be a person under the age of 18 years.
Child abuse	We define child abuse as all forms of physical abuse, neglect, emotional abused and sexual abuse of a child.
Physical abuse	"Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns, or fractures" (Child Wise, 2008).
Emotional abuse	"Emotional abuse is a persistent attack on a child or young person's self-esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child or young person" (Child Wise, 2008). A child may also be subject to emotional trauma or abuse if they are forced to, or inadvertently, become a witness to domestic violence. Where this occurs deliberately it is a form of abuse.
Neglect	"Neglect is the failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter and supervision to the extent that the child's health and development are at risk" (Child Wise, 2008).
Sexual abuse	"Sexual abuse is the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. Sexual abuse includes rape, incest and all forms of sexual activity involving children, including exposing children to, or taking, pornographic photographs" or other media/materials (Child Wise, 2008). Child sexual abuse damages children physically, emotionally and behaviourally. Both its initial effects and long term consequences impact on the individual, on their family and on the community. Initial effects of child sexual abuse may include: • Medical problems such as sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy and physical injury • Emotional problems such as guilt, anger, hostility, anxiety, fear, shame, lowered self-esteem • Behavioural problems such as aggression, delinquency, nightmares, phobias, eating and sleeping disorders • School problems and truancy Long term consequences may include:

	• Sexual dysfunction (such as flashbacks, difficulty in arousal, avoidance of, or phobic reactions to, sexual intimacy)
	• Promiscuity
	• Prostitution
	• Discomfort in intimate relationships
	• Isolation
	• Marital problems
	• Low self-esteem
	• Depression
	• Mental health problem

2. Principles and values

The following principles and values reflect UQ International Development's stance on child protection:

Zero tolerance of child abuse: UQ International Development does not tolerate any form of child abuse, nor does it tolerate possession or access to any material that is abusive towards children. Guidance and training on child protection risk management is provided to UQ International Development staff and consultants. UQ International Development will not knowingly engage anyone who poses a direct risk to children.

Recognition of children's interests: UQ International Development recognises that circumstances can place some children at greater risk of abuse. Of particular vulnerability are children with disabilities, children in natural disaster and conflict situations, as well as children in post natural disaster and conflict situations.

Sharing responsibility of child protection: To effectively manage risks to children, UQ International Development has adopted child protection principles into its code of conduct that all staff and consultants must accept as part of their terms and conditions of employment. In addition, when bidding for Australian Government Aid Program projects in associated with firms that do not have a child protection policy, or the associate firms child protection policy does not comply with the Australian Government Aid Program's child protection policy, UQ International Development will ensure that the associate firm agrees to adopt UQ International Development's child protection policy and code of conduct for the duration of the policy.

Risk management approach: While it is not possible to eliminate the risk of child abuse, UQ International Development will aim to be proactive rather than reactive in managing such risk. This is reflected in the adoption of: a procedure of screening all personnel applying for positions that involve working directly with children; the sharing of responsibility approach outlined above; and staff and consultant training/awareness-raising of circumstances where children are at higher risk of abuse.

3. UQ International Development's Commitment

UQ International Development's commitment to child protection will be guided by the following:

Awareness: we will ensure that all staff and others (including consultants, staff and partners involved in Australian Government Aid Program projects) are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children.

Prevention: we will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimise the risks to children.

Reporting: we will ensure that staff and others are clear on what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.

Responding: we will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns of abuse arise.

Further to the above, UQ International Development will:

- Not permit a person to work with children if it has been identified that they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety or well-being;

- Take all child abuse concerns raised seriously;

- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns;

- Support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns;

- Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation;

- Guide through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child';

- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of children; and

- Work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children.

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4. General procedures

The following general procedures adopted by UQ International Development will mainstream the child protection policy and code of conduct for staff and consultants:

- All UQ International Development staff, and contractors, consultants and volunteers will sign up to and abide by the Code of Conduct, upon joining UQ International Development or an Australian Government Aid Program project;

- All UQ International Development associates involved with an aid or international development project that do not have a child protection policy, or have a child protection policy that is considered adequate by UQ International Development, will be required to sign and abide by UQ International Development's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct;

- All new UQ International Development staff and contractors involved with an aid or international development project will be dismissed or transferred to other duties if he/she breaches the Code of Conduct;

- A reporting procedure is in place to investigate possible abuse once reported and to deal with it. For countries with statutory reporting obligations, this will include activating statutory procedures;

- Training and support will be provided by UQ International Development staff as appropriate to ensure commitments are met;

- Any agreement between UQ International Development and associate firms involved with an aid or international development project which provides services directly to children will require assurance that appropriate child protection policies and procedures are in place;

- Child Protection will be considered as part of initial risk assessments for aid activities and throughout the aid management cycle. A project risk assessment template is located in the Child Protection Risk Management section; and

- Child protection information will be integrated into regular consultant pre-departure briefings before undertaking an assignment overseas.

UQ International Development applies the following procedures to the selection/mobilisation of personnel for positions which involve working directly with children or those travelling for work outside of Australia on aid or international development projects. The following will also be applied if a project's initial risk assessment, or subsequent risk assessments conducted during the project, indicates particularly high risk. UQ International Development can also apply the following at the specific request of a client other than the Australian Government:

- Personnel will be asked to sign a declaration of criminal convictions as part of the application process.

- Personnel will be asked to disclose whether they have been charged with child abuse or exploitation offences.

- Where possible, national criminal record checks will be carried out for each country in which they have lived for 12 months or longer over the last five years and for their country of citizenship.

- An AFP National Police Check can be requested (refer to the Reference List for a link to the website). Note that Option 37 (Care of children/intellectually Disabled/Aged Care Staff/Volunteers) should be selected in Section 2.3 when completing the application.

- Where it is not possible to obtain a criminal record check before the staff member/consultant is mobilised they will be asked to sign an interim declaration declaring any criminal convictions until a national criminal record check can be obtained.

- National Police checks will considered valid and transferable for 12 months (Australian and Foreign police checks). It is recommended that police checks be renewed every three to five years for personnel working directly with children or for high risk projects.

- Where appropriate, targeted questions will be asked during the interview stage, covering prior experience working with children, general attitude towards working with children, and an understanding of the UQ International Development Child Protection Policy.

- Where appropriate, referee questions will target prior experience working with children and general attitude towards children's rights and protection.

- UQ International Development will not engage an individual, or will require an individual to be replaced, if there is an unacceptable risk to a child's safety or well-being.

5. Reporting suspected or actual abuse of children

Reporting suspected or actual child abuse is mandatory for all staff and volunteers, consultants and sub-contractors.

No UQ International Development employee, contractor, consultant, volunteer or associate firm will prejudice their own position or standing with UQ International Development by responsibly reporting someone who they believe is breaking the Child Protection Code of Conduct.

Responsible reporting also means that any person making a report should bear in mind that all concerns are allegations until they have been investigated. For this reason, it is important for anyone raising a concern to follow the reporting model set out below. In particular, confidentiality is expected within the reporting chain.

5.1. Procedural guidelines

All staff should normally discuss their concerns with senior project management, be it a Project Manager or Project Director. Where staff are unable or unwilling to do this, they must raise their concerns with the Deputy Director, UQ International Development.

Discussions should focus on:

- Evidence that the Code of Conduct has been broken;
- The identified risks to the child/children;
- Measures for safeguarding children and minimising risk; and
- Action/next steps

Concerns should be reported as quickly as possible.

Senior project management must inform the Deputy Director, UQ International Development.

Discussions should focus on:

- As assessment of the reported concerns and support needs;
- Whether, and at what stage, the issue should be reported to external bodies; and
- Appropriate response, e.g. disciplinary process or urgent action if children are judged to be at risk.

Senior project management should feel able to consult and seek support from other colleagues as necessary.

5.2. Reporting

Any concerns, allegations or disclosures must be recorded in writing, signed and dated, and communicated as soon as possible to senior project management and/or the Deputy Director, UQ International Development.

Records should be detailed and precise, focusing on what was said or observed, who was present and what happened. Speculation and interpretation should be clearly distinguished from reporting.

You should provide as much information as possible, including:

- Date(s) of incident(s);
- Name of organisation(s) involved;
- Alleged offender's details, including name, nationality and occupation;
- Details of alleged incident(s);
- Whether local law enforcement authorities or Australian Federal Policy have been informed;
- If it is an Australian Government Aid Program-funded activity, the name of the activity (if known); and
- Any other relevant information.

Any concern, disclosure or allegation is alleged rather than proven at this point. All such records should be treated as extremely confidential. They should be passed only to the persons specified in this reporting model. It is the responsibility of each individual in possession of the information to maintain confidentiality.

However, confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed. It must be made clear that following the steps in this policy is an obligation. Explanations should be given about the possible outcomes that could result from information being reported.

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In certain instances, there will be the obligation for UQ International Development and its staff to report concerns to the appropriate external bodies. This will usually occur as a consequence of the reporting procedure. However, if urgent action is required in order to protect children then it may be prior to the reporting procedure.

5.3. Responding to concerns

In order to protect children it may be necessary to take immediate action to ensure that the Code of Conduct is not broken again and/or that further abuse cannot take place.

The best interests of the child and their desire to secure the best outcomes for the child should always govern decisions regarding what action should be taken in response to concerns.

The Deputy Director, UQ International Development will decide what sanctions will be taken against breaches in consultation with The University of Queensland officers responsible for advising on Code of Conduct matters.

Some concerns may be so serious that they would have to be reported to local authorities and police. In these circumstances, based on local guidelines, UQ International Development will assess on a case-by-case basis what steps to take. If the concerns are reported to local authorities, UQ International Development staff will assist the authorities wherever possible but, if overseas, may also need to make arrangements, possible through the Australian Embassy or High Commission, to seek representation for the person who has had allegations made against them.

6. Communications and children

In its communications and publications, UQ International Development uses images that are decent and respectful, and which do not present children as victims. Children must always be presented in images as adequately clothed and poses that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive are unacceptable.

Any personal or physical information that could be used to identify a child and/or their location within a country must not be used in UQ International Development communications and publications.

7. Legislation

UQ International Development's child abuse complaints handling procedure will take into account the relevant legislation in both Australia and the country in which the alleged incident took place.

8. Monitoring and Review

UQ International Development's Child Protection Policy should be treated as a living document and will continue to be reviewed to ensure it is responsive to the needs of UQ International Development and its commitment to good/best practice in the protection of children.

The following checklist can be used to establish to what extent the policy has been implemented:

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- Staff are aware of UQ International Development's Child Protection Policy;

- Signed Codes of Conducts for all staff, contractors and consultants are kept on file;

- A risk assessment for all major projects managed by UQ International Development are kept on file;

- Risk assessments are reviewed/updated throughout the lifecycle of the activities;

- Child Protection training conducted for all UQ International Development staff on an annual basis;

- Child Protection information integrated into regular consultant pre-departure briefings before undertaking an assignment overseas; and

- Clear reporting guidelines available to all personnel including consultants and subcontractors.

For personnel identified as working directly with children or as working on projects identified as high risk during the initial risk assessment, as well as project involving overseas travel the following can be used to judge level of policy compliance:

- Documented criminal record checks for personnel are kept on file;

- Applicant declarations of criminal convictions are kept on file or declarations relating to charges related to exploitation offences;

- Documented verbal referee checks for personnel in contact with children, as part of their work, are kept on file; and

- Interview plans incorporating behavioural-based interview questions that are specific to positions that involve working with children are kept on file.

9. Recognising the signs

9.1. Who is most likely to abuse a child?

- Someone who is known to the child

- Someone who the child trusts

- Someone who the family trusts (i.e. not a stranger)

- Someone who has access to the child

- Someone who has themselves experienced abuse as a child (Abel and Osborne, 1988)

9.2. How to recognise abuse

Listed below are a number of indicators of abuse; however, they may vary by cultural and economic context. It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive but is a guideline to help establish whether some form of child abuse or exploitation has taken place.

9.2.1. Emotional signs of abuse

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- Sudden under achievement or lack of concentration

- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or become clinging

- Depression or extreme anxiety

- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness

- Obsessions or phobias

- Persistent tiredness

- Running away/stealing/lying

9.2.2. Indicators of possible physical abuse

- Any injury inconsistent with explanation given to them

- Injuries to the body in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc

- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games

- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains

- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have a reasonable explanation

- Infections and/or symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases

- General bruises, scratches or other injuries not consistent with accidental injury

9.2.3. Indicators of possible sexual abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning abuse

- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or engaging in age inappropriate sexual play

- Sexually provocative or seductive with adults

- Sudden changes in mood or behaviour

- Open displays of sexuality

- Lack of trust in familiar adults; fear of strangers

- General bruises, scratches or other injuries not consistent with accidental injury

- Acting-out behaviour – aggression, lying, stealing, unexplained running away, drug and alcohol abuse, suicide attempts

9.2.4. Indicators of possible neglect

- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school

- Inadequate care

9.2.5. How child sex offenders choose and 'groom' children

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Child sexual abuse is different to other forms of abuse that children may experience in that it is usually premeditated. Sexual offending is not a random act; it is frequently carefully thought out and well planned. Offenders will take time to groom their victim. This appears to have two elements: choosing a victim that appeals to the offender; and picking someone the offender believes he/she can safely victimise. What follows is a process called 'grooming'. This process means that the offender will manipulate people and situations in order to gain and maintain access to their victim(s). Some sex offender's work alone; others operate in a network.

Grooming is an insidious process; it is a dual process of:

- Building a trusting relationship with the child and his/her carers; and
- Isolating the child in order to abuse them.

Grooming occurs before the sex offence in order to access the child and after the offence in order to:

- Maintain access to the child; and
- Ensure the child's silence, and the carer/adults continued trust.

9.2.6. Why don't children tell?

Sex offenders frequently justify their behaviour long after the fact by saying that the victim didn't say no. The assumption that children will resist the abuse, preferably violently, is based both on ignorance about the power relationship between adults and children and an underestimation of the skilfulness of offenders.

A number of barriers to children speaking out and revealing abuse have been identified. Children don't speak out because they:

- Are scared
- Think they are to blame
- Think they are strange in some way
- Don't want the abuser to get into trouble
- Feel embarrassed
- Feel guilty
- Feel alone

Reference List

10. Useful links

Document / website	Description	Location
Website	National Policy Check (NPC) Online Application Form	https://afpnationalpolicechecks.converga.com.au/
Website	The Child Protection Act 1999	https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1999-010
Website	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	https://www.unicef.org/crc/
Website	Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	http://www.refworld.org/docid/47fdfb180.html
Website	Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	http://www.refworld.org/docid/47fdfb180.html
Website	Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child	http://www.un-documents.net/gdrc1924.htm
Website	1.50.01 Code of Conduct (The University of Queensland)	https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.50.01-code-conduct

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Child Protection Code of Conduct

I, [insert name] ………………………………… , acknowledge that I have read and understand UQ International Development's Child Protection Policy, and agree that in the course of my association with UQ International Development and its clients, I must:

- Treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;

- Not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;

- Not engage children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts;

- Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children;

- Not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger or have been granted permission from a guardian/parent;

- Not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible;

- Use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium, this includes any material which is classified as child abuse material or child pornography material;

- Not use physical punishment on children;

- Not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;

- Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation, including labour laws in related to child labour;

- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with appropriate procedures;

- Immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with UQ International Development that relate to child exploitation and abuse.

Use of children's images for work related purposes

When photographing or filming a child for work related purposes, I must:

- Before photographing or filming a child, assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions and restrictions for reproducing personal images;

- Obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used;

- Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;

- Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts, about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

I understand that the onus is on me, as a person engaged by UQ International Development to use common sense, avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child abuse, and report any suspected cases of child abuse to UQ International Development when implementing UQ International Development activities.

Signed: ……………………………………………..   Date: ………………………………

Child Protection Risk Management

Prior to conducting a development project it is appropriate to access the child protection risks associated with the project activities.

The below information draws from the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) guidelines for developing a child protection policy (refer to the cover page for a link to the guidelines).

The risk assessment involves mapping out the type of contact personnel including consultants, staff and volunteers will have with children. The risk assessment will highlight risks to children, in terms of child abuse and how these will be managed. Strategies should then be developed to reduce or remove these risks.

A risk log can be used, similar to the following:

Risk	Probability	Impact	Action	Status
Program related: specify				
Activity related: specify				
Location related: specify				
Personnel related: specify				
Other: specify				

The questions in identifying risks are:

- What are the practical details of the program?
- What could go wrong (risk)?
- What is the likelihood of something going wrong (probability)?
- What would the consequences be (impact)?

High risk factors can include:

- Working with children who are:
  - Very young
  - Have been abandoned, orphaned
  - Living with disabilities
  - Already victims of abuse and exploitation
  - Living without a carer
  - Displaced

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- Staff and volunteers who:
    - Have not been screened carefully e.g. through interviews, police checks and reference checks
    - Were recruited quickly for immediate deployment e.g. in emergency situations
    - Are not supervised adequately

- Locations which are:
    - Isolated
    - Disaster areas
    - Overcrowded
    - Refugee camps
    - In war or other civil unrest
    - Secluded or inaccessible
    - Home-based

- Activities which involve:
    - One-to-one contact
    - Physical contact
    - Personal hygiene tasks
    - Swimming, bathing, changing
    - Staffing by volunteers

- Supervision which:
    - Is non-existent or informal, such as where visitors can attend a child based program unsupervised
    - Includes areas where visitors outside are not encouraged to visit a program
    - Involves staff working alone

With each project where these risk factors are identified it may be appropriate to put together specific measures for that project. These measures can build upon the existing UQ International Development Child Protection Policy but may identify specific ways of reducing these risks and include specific procedures taking into account the in-country context.

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Document History

Version	Summary of changes	Author	Action date
1.0	Approved UQ International Development Child Protection Policy	Joe Mclean	January 2015
1.1	Amendments to template;	Lauren Hamilton	20/02/2018
2.0	Approved Child Protection Policy	Dallas Dowsett	21/02/2018

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