AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE
EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS

RTO ID: 91110
Suite 10/17 Gerrale Street, Cronulla 2230 NSW
Tel: +61 2 9386 2500

Email: admin@australiancollege.edu.au
Visit: www.australiancollege.edu.au

Students Under the Age of 18 Policy

Scope

This policy is applicable to Australian College. Specifically, this policy applies to:

- current and future students who are under the age of eighteen (18) before or at the time of application, and continuing until they reach the age of eighteen (18);
- employees and contractors of Australian College;
- face-to-face contact including but not limited to work placements;
- all virtual spaces such as online forums, webinars, online workshops, platforms, learning management systems, social media and communities arranged or facilitated by Australian College or third parties providing any services to Australian College.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide guidance when making decisions concerning students who are under the age of eighteen (18);
- ensure appropriate arrangements are made to protect the personal safety and social wellbeing of students in accordance with Commonwealth, state and territory legislation relating to child welfare and protection.
- outline specific welfare requirements for Under 18s where Australian College:

    - delivers training and assessment within Australia;
    - is registered as a Registered Training Organisation;
    - provides non-accredited courses;
    - organises work placements in industry;
    - is not a registered CRICOS provider.

Policy Statement

On 1st January 2023 the Child Safe Standards (Guideline 6) became fully auditable for RTO's that deliver to students under 18 years of age.

RTO ID: 91110
Suite 10/17 Gerrale Street, Cronulla 2230 NSW
Tel: +61 2 9386 2500

Email: admin@australiancollege.edu.au
Visit: www.australiancollege.edu.au

The child welfare and protection legislation in Australia applies to young people and children who are students under the age of eighteen (18). The minimum age permitted for an Under 18 enrolment at Australian College is fifteen (15) years of age.

Australian College will do anything it is in its power to protect all under 18's Students and will ensure its staff, trainers/assessors and contractors are made aware of this policy and its requirements.

More information can be accessed here: https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/standard-6/

Definitions

The following terms and definitions are applicable to this Policy:
Child or Children – *in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, child means any human under the age of 18 years.*
Blended delivery - An instructional method which includes a combination of online and face-to-face learning.
Direct contact - The screening clearance requirements vary between the states and territories. Victoria has the most prescriptive definition for 'direct contact' with under 18s, being face-to-face, physical, written, oral or electronic. As Australian College is a national provider, the Victorian definition has been adopted.
Enrolment of Under 18s - The point at which the Under 18 student enrols in their course and their admission / enrolment is signed by their parent(s) or guardian(s).
Face-to-face delivery - An instructional method where course content and learning material are facilitated in person with a group of students.
Mandatory reporting - State and Territory legislation defines specific groups of people for whom it is mandatory to report the abuse or neglect of children and young people to government authorities.
Minors - Term used in legislation for students who are under the age of eighteen at the time of application and/or during part or all of their course of study. Also known as Under 18's.
National Principles - *The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations* is a nationally recognised framework for the welfare and safety of Under 18s; affirmed by all levels of government.
Online delivery - An instructional method where course content and learning material is delivered over the internet with no direct face-to-face interaction.
Police check - A mandatory check of an employee or contractor to determine whether they have a criminal record and would present a risk if working with children or young people. The screening requirements vary between the States and Territories. Under 18s Students who are under the age of eighteen (18) before enrolment, at the time of application and/or during part or all of their course of study.
Working with Children Check - The Working with Children Check (WWCC) is a mandatory background check of an employee or contractor to assess their suitability for working with children or young people. The screening requirements vary between the States and Territories.
Work integrated learning - A period of supervised work for the practical application of learning as part of a course or qualification.

RTO ID: 91110
Suite 10/17 Gerrale Street, Cronulla 2230 NSW
Tel: +61 2 9386 2500

Email: admin@australiancollege.edu.au
Visit: www.australiancollege.edu.au

Policy Principles

Australian College uses the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations* as a framework for the welfare and safety of Under 18s.
The Child Safe Standards in this framework have been adapted and imbedded in Australian College's Policy Principles for young people who are Under 18s:

- Child safety is embedded in the College's leadership, governance and culture.
- Children and young people participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- Families and communities are informed and involved.
- Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are considered.
- People working with children are suitable and supported.
- Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are age appropriate.
- Employees are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe
  through continual education and training.
- Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur.
- Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved.
- Policies and procedures document how the institution is safe for children and young people.

Guidelines

Screening clearances

All employees, including contractors, must have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) conducted according to State or Territory regulatory requirements.
Australian College ensures WWCC's are completed for all new employees and/or contractors, with all employment contracts requiring mandatory screening clearances.

Admissions/Enrolment

Admission/Enrolment into a course is in accordance with Australian College's Enrolment Policy.
The parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign the admissions application/enrolment form for a student who is Under 18.
The Date of Birth is required to determine the age of the student for accredited and professional courses enrolments.

Emergency Contacts and Mandatory Reporting

RTO ID: 91110
Suite 10/17 Gerrale Street, Cronulla 2230 NSW
Tel: +61 2 9386 2500

Email: admin@australiancollege.edu.au
Visit: www.australiancollege.edu.au

Australian College will maintain current records of the contact details of students, parents, legal guardians or any other adult responsible for the student's welfare. If contact details change, the student must notify Australian College within seven (7) calendar days.
Australian College must provide Under 18s with information on who to contact in emergency situations, including contact numbers of nominated employees and information on seeking assistance and reporting any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual assault, physical or other abuse.
State and Territory legislation defines specific groups of people for whom it is mandatory to report the abuse or neglect of children and young persons to government authorities. Mandatory reporters include trainers/assessors and student support officers. All employees and contractors to whom a child discloses allegations of abuse or neglect should follow the mandatory reporting procedures available here: https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/report-an-allegation/

Electronic Media

Australian College is committed to providing a safe online environment. Students must abide by all relevant laws, policies and procedures when using electronic media. Students are personally accountable and liable for everything they upload online.
Students should refer to Australian College's *Electronic Media Policy* for further information.

Face-to-face and Online Contact

Under 18 students are to be identified to any employees who may be required to interact with the student, including being identified as Under 18s on the Learning Management System (LMS), any assessment lists or means of correspondence (such as emails).
All reasonable efforts to mitigate risks are made to make Australian College a safe place for Under 18s.
Employees or contractors should avoid being alone with an Under 18 student by:

- requesting the presence of an additional staff member
- requesting the U18 student to bring their own support person
- recording the conversation (online only and with the student's consent).

Support and Welfare

Australian College offers students who are Under 18 a safe learning environment through a range of services including:

- a central point of contact;
- an awareness of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- access or referral to welfare-related support services;
- regular contact;
- age-appropriate emergency and orientation information and management of grievances, complaints and appeals;

RTO ID: 91110
Suite 10/17 Gerrale Street, Cronulla 2230 NSW
Tel: +61 2 9386 2500

Email: admin@australiancollege.edu.au
Visit: www.australiancollege.edu.au

- parents or guardians are kept informed with approval sought for all changes to an Under 18s enrolment;
- surveys and other opportunities to contribute the student's opinions about their education and welfare to inform policies and procedures for Under 18's;
- providing this additional support until the student reaches the age of eighteen (18). The Date of Birth is required to determine when the student is 18 for accredited and professional course enrolments.

Employee Training

All staff are required to adhere to their responsibilities in regard to this policy.
New employees must complete an orientation on working with Under 18's, with annual refresher training to be completed by all employees.
The training will vary depending on the role and level of contact with Under 18's, and is required for the following people including but not limited to:

- employees;
- contracted trainers/assessors;
- third parties, if applicable.

In addition to the above, staff, trainers/assessors and contractors can access external online training from Child Safe, Human Rights Commission Learning Hub here:
https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/learning-hub

Guiding Procedures

Australian College's intent is to create an environment of wellbeing and safety for Under 18's and encompasses the following guiding procedures:

- a child protection screening process for new and existing employees, contractors trainers/assessors;
- a register of clearance screening of all Australian College employees and contractors will be maintained by the College to determine when clearance screening is due for renewal.
- an age appropriate Under 18's webpage on the Australian College's website with a weblink provided in all welcome emails to new students;
- information included in the orientation program for Under 18 students;
- information included in the orientation program on working with Under 18's for employees, contractors and trainers/assessors;
- annual refresher training on policies relevant to working with Under 18's for employees, contractors and trainers/assessors;
- an admissions/enrolment process for Under 18's:
  - to ensure consistency of approach with Under 18 students

RTO ID: 91110
Suite 10/17 Gerrale Street, Cronulla 2230 NSW
Tel: +61 2 9386 2500

Email: admin@australiancollege.edu.au
Visit: www.australiancollege.edu.au

  - to ensure the authenticity of the parent(s) or guardian(s) signature for all Under 18's admissions / enrolments at Australian College
- maintaining emergency contact details of Under 18's and parent(s)/guardian(s) with regular check for any changes in contact details;
- provide under 18's with:
  - a central point of contact;
  - access or referral to welfare-related support services;
  - regular contact;
  - monitoring of their progress;
  - surveys to contribute their opinions about the provision of their education and their welfare.
- provide parent(s) or guardian(s) of under 18's with:
  - updates on course progress, critical incidents and any grievances, complaints or appeals
  - approval rights of any deferral, suspension, extension or cancelation of the Under 18's studies
- all employees and contractors in positions of leadership and management must identify opportunities and take steps for continuous improvement to policies and procedures for Under 18's.
- all reasonable efforts are made to ensure that Australian College is a safe place for Under 18's.

Complaints and Appeals

Any grievance, complaint or appeal in relation to the implementation of this policy will be managed in accordance with the *Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy* located on the Australian College website.

Relevant Legislation and Guidelines

As a registered education provider, Australian College operates under strict legislation and regulations. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the legislative instruments referenced below.

- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Commonwealth Child Safe Framework / National Office for Child Safety
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse / National Office for Child Safety
- Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

RTO ID: 91110
Suite 10/17 Gerrale Street, Cronulla 2230 NSW
Tel: +61 2 9386 2500

Email: admin@australiancollege.edu.au
Visit: www.australiancollege.edu.au

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Australian College policies:

- Code of Conduct
- Electronic Media Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Handling Policy
- Record Management Policy
- Terms and Conditions
- Enrolment Policy
- Marketing and Advertising Policy
- Student Handbook
- Incident Report
- Complaints and Appeals Form

Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually or amended following continuous improvement strategies implemented by the Australian College.

Version Control and Responsible Officers

Responsible Officer:		Chief Executive Officer
Approved by:		Chief Executive Officer
Next review scheduled:		June 2026
Approved and commenced:		June 2025
Version	**Authored/Reviewed by**	**Brief Description of Changes**
V2.0	Quality and Compliance Manager	New policy. (March 2023)
V2.1	Quality and Compliance Manager	Policy review and update as part of annual review and continuous improvement. (June 2025)