

Information for Griffith University Students undertaking Professional Practice and Other Activities which may come within the ambit of the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)*

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Document URL	http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Information for Students Undertaking Professional Practice.pdf
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Description	<p>The <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)</i>, requires people seeking work with children in a paid, voluntary or self-employed capacity to undergo a criminal history check - the 'working with children check' - and impose penalties on those deemed "not suitable" who apply for, engage in or continue to work in child related employment.</p> <p>This legislation has implications for Griffith University students who undertake various types of professional practice activity as part of their degree programs. This information is a guide only. Students should refer to the <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)</i> for full details of screening requirements.</p>

Related documents

[Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000 \(Qld\)](#) (previously the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld)*)

[Student Blue Card Application Form](#)

[Queensland Government Blue Card Services](#)

[Inability to Complete Required Components of Professional Qualification Policy](#)

[Student Review and Appeals Policy](#)

[Student Misconduct Policy](#)

[Placement Essentials](#)

[\[Why does this legislation have any effect on me?\]](#) [\[When do I need to undergo the suitability check?\]](#) [\[How do I undergo the suitability check?\]](#) [\[Is there a fee for the suitability check?\]](#) [\[What if I am unable to provide the required identity documents?\]](#) [\[How often do I have to go through the suitability check?\]](#) [\[What if I fail the suitability check?\]](#) [\[What if I lose my Blue Card?\]](#) [\[Where can I get more information?\]](#)

1. WHY DOES THIS LEGISLATION HAVE ANY EFFECT ON ME?

If you are required as part of your University degree to undertake professional placement, clinical practice, teaching practice, internship or other activity which involves you coming into regular contact with children, then you will be required to undergo the 'working with children check' and to hold a 'suitability card' (a Blue Card) in order for you to undertake these activities. The purpose of the working with children check is to screen persons employed in particular employment to promote and protect the rights, interests and wellbeing of children in Queensland.

The type of placements which come within the scope of the legislation are placements in the areas of:

- Schools
- Child care and similar employment
- Out-of-home residential facilities
- School boarding houses
- Churches, clubs and associations involving children
- Health, counselling and support services
- Education programs outside of school
- Private teaching, coaching or tutoring
- Child accommodation services, including homestays
- Sport and active recreation
- Licensed care services
- Disability services.

Children are defined as under 18 years of age.

The legislation applies to persons employed in a voluntary or paid capacity, which includes university students undertaking professional practice.

Even if you yourself are under 18 years of age, you are still required to undergo the suitability check.

2. WHEN DO I NEED TO UNDERGO THE SUITABILITY CHECK?

The legislation makes it an offence for an employer - the agency with whom you are undertaking your professional practice - to take you as a trainee student if you have not undergone a suitability check and been issued with a Blue Card. Your Professional Practice Coordinator will inform you of the need to apply for a Blue Card.

The legislation requires that you have been issued with your Blue Card before you undertake your placement. If you have not been issued with your Blue Card, you are not permitted to commence your placement. This may result in you having to wait until another trimester in order to undertake your required professional practice which could mean that you take longer before completing your degree. It is your responsibility to lodge your application correctly in sufficient time for the suitability check to be completed (at least 10 weeks) and the Blue Card issued prior to the time you are due to undertake a placement.

3. HOW DO I UNDERGO THE SUITABILITY CHECK?

The suitability check involves you filling out an application form. Copies are available from your Professional Practice Coordinator or from the government web site

<http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/applications/need-to-apply-for-card.html>

You are required to complete the form and lodge it at a Student Administration Centre. In some cases you will be instructed to return the form to your Professional Practice Coordinator.¹

The form requires you to supply certain "Proof of Identity" documents. These documents include driver's licence, birth certificate, passport, credit card, bank statement, rates notice, electoral card, and other documents, which are specified on the application form.

¹ The legislation permits either the employer (your placement agency) or the University to lodge your Blue Card application form. It is expected that most placement agencies will expect the University to lodge student forms. However, if you lodge your application form through a placement agency, or if you already have a current Blue Card, please inform your Professional Practice Coordinator.

You need to provide two original documents when you lodge your form. The University does not retain the documents, but the officer who signs your form is required to certify that they have sighted the documents.

The University then lodges the completed suitability check application form on your behalf to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The suitability check involves carrying out a check of criminal history.

When the suitability check is completed, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General issues you with a 'Suitability Card' - the Blue Card.

4. IS THERE A FEE FOR THE SUITABILITY CHECK?

University students are classed as volunteers and are not required to pay a fee to undergo the suitability check.

5. WHAT IF I AM UNABLE TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED IDENTITY DOCUMENTS?

If for some reason you are unable to provide acceptable identity documents, please contact your Professional Practice Coordinator.

6. HOW OFTEN DO I HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE SUITABILITY CHECK?

When you are issued with a Blue Card, the card is valid for three years, unless it is cancelled, and is transferable to all types of professional placement activities which you undertake during those three years. You will need to apply for renewal of your Blue Card for a further period, if you have not completed your degree within the three year life of the Blue Card.

7. WHAT IF I FAIL THE SUITABILITY CHECK?

If your application for a Blue Card is rejected, you must immediately inform your Professional Practice Coordinator. The legislation provides for an appeal process, so if there has been a mistake, you will be able to lodge an appeal.

If the Department of Justice and Attorney-General declines to issue you with a Blue Card, you will not be permitted to undertake your professional practice. Your Program Director will advise you on your options if this situation arises.

8. WHAT IF I LOSE MY BLUE CARD?

To ensure you are issued with your Blue Card, please make sure that you provide an accurate and reliable mailing address and mobile phone number on the application form and keep the Department of Justice and Attorney-General informed of any change of address or mobile phone number.

From August 2014, Blue Card Services will be delivering blue card renewal reminders via text message (SMS) to mobile phones. If you have never provided your mobile number to Blue Card Services, you will receive a blue card renewal reminder via regular mail 10 weeks prior to the expiry of your card.

If you lose your Blue Card, you must advise Blue Card Services by completing a [card/notice letter lost or stolen form](#) within 14 days, if your blue card is lost or stolen and pay the prescribed fee for a replacement card.

Your Blue Card is an important document and you should look after it carefully.

9. WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Visit the [Blue Card Services](#) website for more information or refer to the [Working with Children Act \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000 \(Qld\)](#).

If you have questions or concerns, please approach your Professional Practice Coordinator in the first instance. You may also direct questions to:

Academic Registrar | academic-registrar@griffith.edu.au | Telephone 3735 7375