

SKILLINVEST CHILD SAFE POLICY AND STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

VERSION

2026-01

LAST REVIEW

April 2026

NEXT REVIEW

April 2027

REVIEW FREQUENCY

Annual

APPROVAL

Any updates or amendments to this policy must be approved by the Skillinvest Board of Directors

SKILLINVEST LIMITED

CHILD SAFE POLICY AND STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

This policy sets out the expectations of all staff to provide a safe environment for young people and details Skillinvest's approach to managing risks. This policy provides guidance on the processes and procedures to ensure child safety throughout our organisation and it demonstrates our commitment to child safe practices.

We promote diversity and inclusion in our organisation, and people from diverse cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- recognise that cultural immersion is fundamental to wellbeing and that every child has the right to connect with their history, community, cultural practices, and identity.
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- believe all people regardless of race, gender, religion, disability, environment, association, background or sexual identity have the right to be treated in a fair manner that promotes equity and equality;
- ensure children with a disability are safe and can participate equally,
- have zero tolerance against racism and discrimination.

Skillinvest is committed to child safety and has a duty of care to ensure the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

Skillinvest supports and respects all children and has zero tolerance of child abuse.

Employees are not expected to be child safe experts, or to have all the answers to the child safety issues they may encounter. However, employees are expected to have an awareness of child abuse, to understand reporting obligations, and to seek advice when determining whether to report an allegation or suspicion of child abuse.

Allegations and safety concerns involving children will be taken extremely seriously and handled in accordance with Skillinvest's policies and procedures.

CHILD SAFE POLICY

This policy adheres to compliance requirements as detailed in the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

The purpose of the Child Safe Policy is to ensure that all employees, consultants, contractors and volunteers engaged by Skillinvest (**staff**) are aware of Skillinvest's commitment and obligation to creating a child safe organisation.

The policy details Skillinvest's commitment to child safety and Skillinvest's approach to complying with the Standards.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The Victorian Government implemented the Child Safe Standards, which are compulsory minimum standards for organisations that provide services for children (or are used by children), to protect those children from harm.

The following Government Child Safe Standards apply to Skillinvest. Also detailed below are Skillinvest's principles corresponding to each of the Standards.

Child Safe Standard 1	Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
Child Safe Standard 2	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
Child Safe Standard 3	Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
Child Safe Standard 4	Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
Child Safe Standard 5	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
Child Safe Standard 6	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
Child Safe Standard 7	Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused
Child Safe Standard 8	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
Child Safe Standard 9	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
Child Safe Standard 10	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
Child Safe Standard 11	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Skillinvest has a zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to preventing harm, child abuse and responding promptly to allegations. Skillinvest demonstrates this commitment by embedding a strong culture of child safety across all levels of the organisation.

The specific obligations relating to each level within Skillinvest's structure is as follows:

- The Board has a responsibility to monitor the adherence and appropriateness of the organisation's policies and procedures for protecting children from abuse;
- The CEO is responsible for promoting an organisational culture and implementing policies and procedures that aim to protect children from abuse;
- Senior Leaders have a responsibility to raise awareness of the importance of child safety at Skillinvest and in the communities we operate within. They have a defined role

and responsibility for providing information and advice in relation to child safety and managing inquiries, concerns and complaints in relation to child safety or abuse;

- The Training and Operations Managers are responsible for providing information and instruction in the requirements of the Code of Conduct and this Statement to staff and other relevant parties with responsibility for the care and supervision of children and other young people;
- Staff and other relevant individuals engaged in child connected work (including volunteers) must agree to abide by our Duty of Care and Code of Conduct that provides guidance on how to behave with children and the standards of conduct;
- Skillinvest also has designated Child Safety Officers who have specific responsibilities relating to the reporting of child abuse.

Skillinvest will create a culture and environment where:

- Children feel safe and empowered, and are informed about all of their rights, including right to safety, information and participation;
- Child Safe Policy, Statement of Commitment and Procedures are published and accessible on the Skillinvest website
- Staff, volunteers, children and families feel comfortable and supported when talking about child safety concerns;
- The physical and online environment within Skillinvest facilities is inclusive, safe and welcoming for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples as well as disabled people and people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Any report of a child safety concern will be treated seriously and with the utmost expediency and confidentiality, while providing support to those expressing the concern or making a report. In addition, Skillinvest will strive for best practice through engaging in continuous improvement by:

- Reviewing all policies and procedures relating to child safety on an annual basis;
- Mitigating risks in the online and physical environments without compromising the children's and young people's right to privacy, access to information, social connection, and learning opportunities;
- Engaging with members of various communities to ensure the policies and procedures are sufficient as well as culturally sensitive and safe;
- Reporting and reviewing all incidents at Management level internally to determine whether any improvements to policies and procedures could have prevented any incidents.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 1 - ORGANISATIONS ESTABLISH A CULTURALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE DIVERSE AND UNIQUE IDENTITIES AND EXPERIENCES OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE RESPECTED AND VALUED.

Skillinvest will promote culturally safe environments where Aboriginal children and young people feel respected, valued and safe. All Staff undertake cultural awareness training through our online system and the training module has been designed to provide our Staff with an introduction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, increasing awareness and enabling our Staff to contribute to an inclusive and culturally sensitive learning environment.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 2 - CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING IS EMBEDDED IN ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE.

Skillinvest's Child Safe Policy and Statement of Commitment to child safety meets the requirements of Standard 2 by providing an overarching set of principles that guide the

development of policies and procedures to protect children from child abuse. This document is publicly available through Skillinvest's website or copies can be provided on request.

Skillinvest has a Duty of Care and Code of Conduct that complies with the requirements of Standard 3 in that it establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

All employees employed in accordance with the Skillinvest Enterprise Agreement, and volunteers engaged in a Skillinvest program, advisory, consultative or reference group/committee are made aware of and must abide by Skillinvest's Duty of Care and Code of Conduct.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 3 - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE EMPOWERED ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS, PARTICIPATE IN DECISIONS AFFECTING THEM AND ARE TAKEN SERIOUSLY.

Skillinvest is committed to ensuring that children not only feel safe and comfortable reporting concerns or allegations of abuse but are also aware of how they can report abuse, inappropriate behaviour or concerns for their safety.

Procedures relating to how Skillinvest further upholds this standard are outlined in the Child Safe Procedures document.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 4 - FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES ARE INFORMED, AND INVOLVED IN PROMOTING CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING.

Skillinvest is committed to child safety and wellbeing by supporting families and communities by providing schools with child safety documentation. Skillinvest staff work closely with relevant stakeholders to ensure the Child Safe Standards are understood and followed.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 5 - EQUITY IS UPHELD AND DIVERSE NEEDS RESPECTED IN POLICY AND PRACTICE.

Skillinvest ensure equality and access principles are followed, meeting the diverse needs and respecting participants of all backgrounds, abilities and identities. Skillinvest implements and follows inclusive and respectful environments and applies reasonable adjustments where required to meet individual needs.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 7 - PROCESSES FOR COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS ARE CHILD-FOCUSED

In the event that an individual witnesses an incident, has a disclosure from a child, or forms a reasonable belief that a child is at risk of harm from child abuse or exposure to family violence they have a moral and legal obligation to act.

All incidents or allegations of child abuse must be reported to a Skillinvest Child Safety Officer. Skillinvest's Child Safety Officers are the Training Manager located at the respective site (i.e. Metro, Regional or Longerenong) or in their absence, the General Manager or Chief Executive Officer. Allegations or incidents can be reported by children, families, employees, students, contractors or volunteers.

All reports of child abuse will be treated as serious, whether they are made by an adult or a child. When an allegation of child abuse is received, all mandatory reporting requirements (as specified in the Children, Youth & Families Act 2005) must be met.

Where appropriate, following a report of a child safety concern, Skillinvest will provide support to the person making the report, the victim as well as Skillinvest staff that may be impacted.

Procedures relating to how Skillinvest further upholds this standard are outlined in the Child Safe Procedures document.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 6 - PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SUITABLE AND SUPPORTED TO REFLECT CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING VALUES IN PRACTICE.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 8 - STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS ARE EQUIPPED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS TO KEEP CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE THROUGH ONGOING EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

Skillinvest has robust human resources and recruitment practices in place for all staff and volunteers which ensure staff working with children have certified clearances to be able to work with children. All staff are required to hold a current Working with Children Check, police check at commencement and annual Mandatory reporting and Child Safe training.

Training for all staff is compulsory and enables them to identify risks to children and in responding to signs of abuse and neglect.

Skillinvest is also committed to providing cultural awareness training to all staff at commencement and then on a biennial basis. The commitment for this training to specifically incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness is also embedded in Skillinvest's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Upon commencing with Skillinvest, all staff are provided with a comprehensive induction that outlines Skillinvest's commitment to child safety as well as the expectation that all staff have a responsibility to support that commitment and obligation to creating a child safe environment.

Procedures relating to how Skillinvest further upholds this standard are outlined in the Child Safe Procedures document.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 9 - PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS PROMOTE SAFETY AND WELLBEING WHILE MINIMISING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE HARMED.

Skillinvest aims to ensure that all physical and online environments are safe, inclusive and appropriate for children and young people by actively identifying, assessing and managing risks to child safety in school-based delivery, classroom-based delivery, online/blended learning and during excursions. Students undertaking Skillinvest Training Programs who are under 18 years of age are appropriately supervised during Training and Assessment. Skillinvest has implemented a Student Code of Conduct that must be read, understood and agreed to by all Students which minimises the risk and promotes a safe environment.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 10 – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILD SAFE STANDARDS IS REGULARLY REVIEWED AND IMPROVED.

Skillinvest ensure the Child Safe Policies and Procedures are reviewed annually. In addition, these are updated as required to ensure compliance. Skillinvest adopts a risk-management approach to identify, reduce, and where possible eliminate the risk of child abuse.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 11 – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES DOCUMENT HOW THE ORGANISATION IS SAFE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

Skillinvest Policies and Procedures comply with the Child Safe Standards. Updates to the child safety documents are communicated to employees, consultants, contractors and volunteers engaged by Skillinvest.

FAIR PROCEDURES FOR PERSONNEL

The safety and wellbeing of children is Skillinvest's highest priority, and all investigations will be carried out thoroughly, transparently, and based on evidence.

All allegations of abuse and safety concerns are recorded using the incident reporting form, including investigation updates. Copies of these forms or the information contained within will be provided to the relevant authorities upon a report being made in accordance with the Child Safe Reporting Process outlined above. All records are securely stored.

PRIVACY

To meet its obligations under the Child Safe Standards, Skillinvest may need to collect personal information about an employee, consultant, contractor, student or volunteer and, where necessary, disclose this information to a third party. Any personal information collected or disclosed will be handled in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.

REGULAR REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually and following significant incidents if they occur. Where possible Skillinvest will work with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities, and people with a disability.

DEFINITIONS

Child means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse means any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or an offence under section 49B(2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* or the infliction on a child of physical violence, serious emotional harm, or the serious neglect of a child.

Child Safe Standards as made under section 17(1) of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.

Reasonable Belief is a belief based on facts that would lead a reasonable person to think that reportable conduct may have occurred.

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
Duty of Care and Code of Conduct
Privacy Policy
Reconciliation Action Plan
Child Safe Procedures
Incident Reporting Form

SKILLINVEST DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS CLAUSE

Skillinvest values and promotes diversity, fairness and inclusiveness in the workplace and is committed to ensuring workplace diversity and inclusiveness through establishing proactive strategies, policies and procedures. Skillinvest aims to ensure that all employees, clients, business partners and stakeholders are treated with respect, dignity and fairness to ensure Skillinvest promotes inclusiveness and positive working relationships.

Skillinvest is committed to recognising the value of diversity and inclusiveness in the workplace and ensures that work practices promote equal opportunity and are non-discriminatory.