

# Working with Children (Students) Procedure

## Section 1 - Background and Purpose

- (1) The [Worker Screening Act 2020](#) (the Act) assists in protecting children from sexual or physical harm by ensuring that people who work with, or care for them have their suitability to do so checked by a government body.
- (2) The Working with Children (WCC) Check is administered by the Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation (DOJR) and checks a person's criminal history for serious sexual, violence or drug offences and findings from professional disciplinary bodies.
- (3) A positive assessment from a WWC Check must be obtained before commencing paid or volunteer work in prescribed categories involving direct unsupervised contact with a child.
- (4) Students are considered volunteer workers for the purposes of the Act when undertaking practical or clinical placements.
- (5) Students undertaking child related work or placements outside Victoria should refer to Working with Children website for interstate requirements.

## Section 2 - Scope

- (6) All La Trobe students undertaking child related work or professional placements.

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

- (7) Refer to [Working with Children Policy](#).

## Section 4 - Procedure

### Part A - Application for a WWC Check

- (8) Students cannot commence child related work or professional placements until the University has confirmed a positive Working With Children (WWC) assessment. Applications for WWC Checks should be completed via the Working with Children Check webpage.
- (9) When completing the form students need to take note of the following:
  - a. Organisation Details: Under this section, students should provide details of the School in which their course is undertaken. This information can be obtained directly from the relevant School
  - b. Occupational Fields: The appropriate code should be selected from the table provided on the website.

## **Part B - Student Responsibilities**

(10) La Trobe University students who wish to undertake child-related work or professional placements must:

- a. apply for a WWC Check by the required date
- b. upload a copy of their WWC Check card to the placement management system as required, and/or take their WWC Check card to the relevant School for sighting and registration
- c. inform the relevant School immediately if they are issued with an Interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice
- d. retain their WWC Check card and take it with them while on placements.

(11) The WWC Check card is to be presented on request to an agency where the placement is being undertaken.

(12) Students who receive a negative WWC Check assessment may apply for credit for any successfully completed subjects towards a course not requiring child-related work.

## **Part C - School Responsibilities**

(13) Schools which conduct courses where students are required to be involved in child-related work or professional placements should, prior to the student undertaking placement:

- a. identify all students who are required to apply for a WWC Check and notify them of this requirement with timelines
- b. register a student's WWC Check assessment by confirming a WWC Check card has been uploaded to the placement management system and/or sighted, the status is checked and recorded, the WWC Check number and expiry date recorded with the date
- c. Schools will inform agencies about the WWC Check status where appropriate
- d. retain and secure all correspondence from the DOJR about students

(14) The Department of Justice provides a record keeping spreadsheet for the purpose of registration.

(15) Once these details have been registered, the WWC Check card should be returned to the student.

(16) All course information pertaining to subjects and courses that require students to be involved in child-related work or professional placements must inform about the requirement for a WWC Check.

(17) Where a Negative Assessment or Interim Negative Assessment is received from DOJ the relevant Dean will be informed and the Notice forwarded to Executive Director, Operations for secure storage.

## **Part D - Storage and Destruction of Assessment Notices**

(18) The relevant School, as the nominated organisation responsible for the student volunteer, will receive a copy of the student's Assessment Notice from the Department of Justice.

(19) Schools must ensure an electronic version of WWC Check assessment is recorded.

(20) The physical Assessment Notices received directly from DOJR should be retained in a secure physical file and disposed of after a period of five years from the date of the notice or from the date when the student discontinues, whichever is earlier. Advice should be sought from Records Service before destruction occurs.

(21) Access to the physical and electronic records of Assessment Notices must be available only to authorised staff who have direct responsibility for students' child-related work or professional placements.

(22) If any negative WWC Notices are received, the Dean should be notified and the hard copy record of this notice should be retained securely by the Executive Director, Operations. Any access requests to this document require permission granted by the Executive Director, Operations.

## **Section 5 - Definitions**

(23) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. Assessment Notice: Working with Children Check assessment.
- b. Child: A person under 18 years of age.
- c. Child-related work: Work that usually involves or is likely to involve regular, direct contact with a child in connection with any of the 20 child-related occupational fields set out in the Working with Children Act 2005.
- d. Clinical or practical placement: means a professional practice placement undertaken within a workplace setting by teaching, allied health, medical, nursing and midwifery students who are enrolled in a tertiary institution
- e. The University: means La Trobe University.
- f. Working with Children Check: means the background checking process which is a prerequisite for individuals engaged in child-related work, and involves a full national criminal history check and a review of reported workplace misconduct.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	6th December 2016
<b>Review Date</b>	31st July 2019
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Academic Board
<b>Approval Date</b>	2nd December 2016
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
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