

Standard 3 - Clause 3.6

Unique Student Identifier (USI) Policy and Procedure

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Overview

1. This policy has been developed to ensure that the College fulfils the requirements of Clause 3.6 of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 and the Student Identifiers Act 2014 in regard to the implementation and maintenance of the Unique Student Identifier (USI) Scheme. It also ensures the consistent and accurate capture and reporting of a student's nationally recognised training record in compliance with the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS).
2. From 1 January, 2015, students enrolling in nationally recognised training in Australia will need a Unique Student Identifier (USI). The USI is a form of file number that will link students to their training records which are held in the national training collection. Students will be able to access their records online, download them and share them with future training organisations electronically.
3. With the student's permission, training organisations will be able to see their students' entire nationally recognised training record commencing with records collected in 2015. Training organisations will find it easier to assess pre-requisites and credit transfers and assess students' eligibility for government funded training places.

The USI's main objective is to make record keeping, information exchange and business practice in the Australian VET sector easier and smoother in a range of ways.

Definitions

4. The definitions below are from the USI Registry System - User Guide for Training Organisations:

AVETMISS: Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard

Document Verification Service (DVS): This is a web service provided by the Attorney General's Department that assists in identity verification processes by confirming the validity of IDs provided for state and federally-issued documents (e.g. passport, driver's licence).

DVS Override: This is used if the student does not have a form of ID or one that is acceptable by the DVS system. This right must be applied for by the Organisation to the USI Office and is granted for a period of time and closely monitored.

Unique Student Identifier (USI): An exclusive 10 digit number consisting of letters and numbers and used to link a student's USI account to their training records.

Compliance

The College will ensure the requirements of the Student Identifier scheme are met by:

1. Verifying with the USI Registrar any Student Identifier provided to it by an individual before using that Student Identifier for any purpose;
2. Obtaining an individual's written permission for creating a USI for the individual if so requested by the individual;
3. Ensuring the security of all related USI documentation plus the Student Identifiers under its control, including information stored in its student management systems;
4. Not disclosing the USI or information provided to create the USI except where authorised by law
5. Ensuring that AQF certification documentation is not issued to any individual without being in receipt of a verified Student Identifier for that individual, unless it has ascertained that an exemption applies under the Student Identifiers Act 2014;
6. Ensuring that where an exemption applies, it will inform the student prior to either the completion of the enrolment or commencement of training and assessment, whichever occurs first, that the results of the training will not be accessible through the Commonwealth and will not appear on any authenticated VET transcript prepared by the Registrar; and
7. Ensuring that the USI privacy forms completed and supplied by the individual are destroyed following the issuance and verification of the USI
8. Not using the USI on any Qualifications/Statements of Attainment issued to the individual.

Who Needs a USI?

Students who need a USI include:

- students who are enrolling in nationally recognised training for the first time;
- school students completing nationally recognised training; and
- students continuing with nationally recognised training.

A student who is continuing study is a student who has already started their course in a previous year (and not yet completed it) and will continue studying after 1 January 2015.

Once a student creates their USI they will be able to:

- give their USI to each training organisation they study with;
- give their training organisation permission to view and/or update their USI account;
- give their training organisation view access to their transcript
- view and update their details in their USI account; and
- view online and download their training records and results in the form of a transcript from 2016.
- control access to their transcript from 2016.

The College has an important role to play in either collecting and verifying or creating USIs on behalf of students.

Most students will be able to obtain their USI on their own, although it will be important for the College to prompt them to do this before they enrol.

The College should record a USI for a student at the time of enrolment. However it must be ensured a valid USI for each student is recorded when they report on training activities or issue an AQF certification document, such as a qualification, statement of attainment or testamur.

A student's USI is to only be created or verified once.

Procedure for creating a USI for a student

Where a new or continuing student does not have a USI, the College can create one for the student in the event that the student gives the College permission to do so.

Should the student authorise the College to create a USI on their behalf, the student would need to complete and return the ST93 - Unique Student Identifier Application Form with the relevant details, sign acceptance of the Privacy Notice and provide a suitable form of ID for identity verification purposes.

Prior to creating the USI, the National Manager should give a copy of the USI Privacy Form to the student which the student is required to read and sign.

Once the privacy form is signed by the student, the National Manager should log into the USI organisational portal (or SMS).

Click on the Create USI tab and follow the instructions as follows:

Personal Details

- The first screen that is displayed is the Personal and Contact Details screen. The mandatory fields are shown with a red asterisk. All personal details must match the form of ID.
- The key points to remember when entering Personal Details are:
- The personal details must be entered as they are shown on the student's form of ID (e.g. you must enter the first, and/or middle and the family name exactly as they are shown on the form of ID that the student has presented to you). Abbreviated or nicknames cannot be used unless shown on the form of ID.
- The first question on this screen is "Does the student have a First Name and Family Name?" This is asked because, in some societies, it is common for people to have one name. If only one name appears on the student's form of ID, please select "No, the student only has one name". This will then display one field to be completed entitled "Name".
- There are some fields on this screen that are mandatory. They are indicated by a red asterisk *. The system prevents progressing from this screen if the mandatory fields are not completed.

Contact Details

As you scroll down the screen you will arrive at the Contact Details section. You need only to complete the students Preferred Contact Method, however this does not preclude from entering all fields if it is requested by the student.

The key points to remember when entering Contact Details are:

- You must provide one Preferred Contact Method for the student. The default is email. However, the student may choose to be contacted by mobile phone or mail. By selecting the Preferred Contact Method from the drop down list, the mandatory fields indicated by a red asterisk *, will show next to the field that is to be completed. For email and mobile, you are required to enter the student's details and re-enter to confirm they are correct.
- If the student selects mail as the preferred contact method, please ensure all the address fields are completed. You will also need to make the student aware that it will still be necessary for them to access a computer to activate their account and set their password and check questions, and to change their password or other account details.

- The student's Country of Residence can be selected from the drop down list. In most cases the country of residence will be Australia and this is the default displayed on this screen.
- It is important that the student's contact details are accurate and up to date so that they can be contacted by the USI Office. This may be to confirm changes to their account, password resets and respond to enquiries from the student.
- You need to advise your students to update their USI account if they change their contact details.
- There are some fields on this screen that are mandatory. They are indicated by a red asterisk *.The system prevents progressing from this screen if the mandatory fields are not completed.

Confirm Student's Details

It is important to ensure that you have entered the student's details correctly. The next screen gives you the opportunity to check. By selecting the BACK button you can return to the previous screen and change any inaccuracies. If you are confident that all the information is correct, select the NEXT button at the bottom.

Form of ID

To complete the creation of a USI account, you will need to select the form of ID document being used by the student from the list of document types shown then enter the details from a suitable form of ID for the Student (e.g. Driver's Licence, Medicare card).

This process is designed to ensure the name and some other identity fields used to create a USI match those accepted in a formal identity process. It is easiest and preferable if the student is holding the ID document but acceptable for them to provide the information in another way if necessary.

This information is checked automatically in a process that will normally take less than 30 seconds, by the Attorney General's Department, Document Verification Service.

When you select the form of ID type from the screen the details that are required to verify a student's identity are displayed.

The key points to remember when completing the Form of ID details are:

- There are some fields on this screen that are mandatory. They are indicated by a red asterisk *.The system prevents progressing from this screen if the mandatory fields are not completed.
- Most document types have examples that can be enlarged. Samples of all documents can also be viewed on the website.
- Some of the required fields are document specific according to the document type you are using (e.g. there are differences between birth certificates in different states and years).
- If you require further information about how to complete the Evidence of Identity fields, select Help on the right of the screen. By choosing one of the identity documents in the Help section, more information about that document is displayed. If you want to start again select the BACK button.
- Checking by the DVS will normally take no longer than 30 seconds.

DVS Override (assisting students who do not have proof of identity documents)

Almost all students and most RTOs will have access to one or more forms of ID accepted by the USI Registry system and staff of WIT must use every best endeavour to create USIs using those forms of ID. RTOs are able to assist students with certain special circumstances to create a USI using alternative ID processes.

This is referred to as Document Verification Service (DVS) Override. Conditions for using DVS Override are available at <http://usi.authprod.ind/Training-Organisations/Pages/proof-of-id.aspx>.

If you have been granted DVS override, the button will appear at the end of the list of document types.

The key points to remember after you have created a USI account for a student are:

- The student will be notified that they have a USI account created for them.
- There will be a link in the notification sent to the student's preferred contact method, and they will be required to access the link and activate their account by setting their password and check questions.

You will need to copy the USI number from the screen and enter it into the student management system or record with the student's details as the USI is a requirement of AVETMISS reporting.

Verify USI

This function can be used by RTO's, VET Admission Bodies and VET Related Bodies.

All training organisations are required to verify the USIs they have collected from students, before uploading their AVETMISS data to the NCVER data warehouse, unless they have created the USI account on behalf of the student. When a training organisation creates the USI account on behalf of a student, they are not required to separately verify the USI. This step is very important, as the student may have made a mistake when they provided their USI to you.

You should undertake verification during or soon after enrolment as this is the easiest time to work with the student to correct any errors.

To verify a USI through the USI Registry system, select the Verify USI tile on the Home Page.

When using the USI Registry system, you need only to enter the USI and First name, Family Name and Date of Birth, then select the Verify button at the bottom of the screen. If you have a system-to-system connection, verification will normally happen automatically and notify you of any errors.

After the data has been submitted, the Verification Results are displayed on the screen.

All fields that have been successfully verified will be shown with a green tick i.e. the data matches the corresponding information in the USI Registry system.

If the data is not verified, the fields that do not match are shown with a cross.

The key points to remember when verifying a USI are:

- You must enter the details correctly. It is important that you ensure the student is giving you the exact details (for example name format) they used when they created their USI. This may be different to the name details already stored in your Student Management System.
- Mandatory fields are indicated by a red asterisk *. The system prevents progressing from this screen if the mandatory fields are not completed.

Find a USI

This function can be used only by RTOs.

Training organisations that have previously been given the student's permission to view and or update their personal and contact details or see their training records are able to use this function.

Find USI allows an RTO to:

- search list and view a USI
- update and view the students details if they have permission

If you choose to select fields that may not identify an individual (e.g. if you select surname "Jones"), you may be presented with a list of students that have given you permission to view their records with the same surname.

If the account has not been activated (i.e. the student has not set the password and check questions), the record will not be displayed.

Select the one that matches your find criteria.

Find USI may be used for the following purposes:

If a student needs assistance with changing their personal or contact details: By accessing the Update link, you can make the changes. However, for changes to key personal details (e.g. first name, family name, one name, date of birth, gender) the student will need to provide a form of ID displaying the changes

You need to view the students training record to evaluate whether their previous study will entitle them to be eligible for recognition for prior learning. (Please note this function will not be available until after January 2016 and will only include training completed since the introduction of the USI).

The key points to remember when using Find USI are:

This function is only available to RTOs.

To use Find USI, the student must have given you permission in their USI account to view their records.

If the student has not given you permission, the message "No records were found that match the search details" will be displayed. To gain access you will need to ask the student to log in to their account and set permission for your organisation to gain access.

View Reports

This function can be used by RTO's, VET Admission Bodies and VET Related Bodies to access reports that have been published by the USI Office.

Types of Reports

The essential reports that will be available include:

Deactivated USIs x Reason x Source of Application

This report will present the USI that has been deactivated and the current record.

To maintain the integrity of the data included in the USI Registry system, routine checks will be undertaken to ensure that not more than one USI account has been created for a student (duplicate records) and not more than one student has the same USI (compromised records).

If either of these problems occurs, the USI Office will investigate and take immediate action to resolve and inform the affected parties.

The list of deactivated records and their replacement USI number will be available weekly from the USI Registry system and a notification that the report is available will be published on the website. These reports can be downloaded.

If a student or a Training Organisation identifies that a duplicate record exists, they must contact the USI Office and report their findings.
Suspended USIs x Date Suspended

This report will list all suspended USIs that are currently under investigation by the USI Office. The suspension may be a result of the office being advised that there is a possible duplicate or compromised record. This report will be updated weekly.

Number of USIs generated x Month x source

This report will be a routine report to gauge traffic across the USI Registry system. It will provide the opportunity for the USI Office to be aware of the load on the system and the peaks and troughs. This report may be of interest to training organisations.

It is also intended that training organisations will be able to request ad hoc reports to assist them with their business processes. If these are required, the RTO can contact the USI Office by email at usi@industry.gov.au

The key points to remember when using View Reports are:

- You can only view the reports that are available to your log in.
- You can view the reports on screen or download them to your computer.
- If you require additional reports to assist you to manage your USI business, you will need to contact the USI Office at www.usi.gov.au.
- Check the website for the announcement about the latest reports that are available through the USI Registry system. Reports are not available through the USI Web services.

International students in Australia

International students studying in Australia will need a Unique Student Identifier (USI) from 1 January 2015.

All international students in Australia will have been issued with an Australian Visa. This will let those students use their passports as a form of ID when creating their USI as their visa is linked to their passport number.

Overseas students

An overseas student studying offshore and not having an Australian passport or visa, may be covered by arrangements for collection of USIs and the student will need to contact their training provider or the USI Team for advice about the need to apply for a USI.

The USI and reporting

Each time students complete nationally recognised training, the College must collect and verify their Unique Student Identifier (USI) before we can confer a qualification or statement of attainment.

When the College submits data according to the new VET data collection and reporting requirements, it will now include the USI for each student. This USI will be reported to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and entered in the national data collection.

The new Unique Student Identifier (USI) scheme is underpinned by the Student Identifiers Act 2014, Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 and Student Identifiers Regulation 2014 and these require that the College:

- Collects a USI from each student
- Verifies a USI supplied by a student
- Ensures a student has a valid USI before conferring a qualification or statement of attainment on that student
- Ensures the security of USIs and related documentation
- Destroys any personal information collected solely for the purpose of applying for a USI on behalf of a student
- Adheres to all legislative requirements under the USI legislative requirements. The College will be required to have a valid and verified USI for each of student before a qualification or statement of attainment is issued to that student.

The College can provide nationally recognised qualifications or statement of attainments to students in a variety of different formats.

Below are some examples that are considered a statement of attainment and they cannot be issued until the student has supplied a valid USI that has been verified. They can include:

- A certificate
- A building industry white card

When a student logs into their USI account it will link to the national data collection using the USI. The students USI account will then enable them to see their records and results completed. All student's results from 2015 will be available in their USI accounts in 2016.

Related Documentation

- USI Registry System – User Guide for Training Organisations

Related Policies

- National Code Standard 3 Privacy Policy

Related Forms

- ST93 – Unique Student Identifier Application Form and Privacy Notice