

## CLINICAL (HEALTH) PLACEMENT GUIDELINE: NATIONAL POLICE CHECK

<b>Overview</b>	<p>Due to the nature of patient, client, or general public contact during a course of study, all students attending a clinical(health) placement(s) must obtain a national Police Check prior to commencement of placement to be eligible to be able to attend placement. Students will not be permitted to undertake any placements unless they obtain and provide a copy of a satisfactory Police Check to the University. Students must be able to present the document on the first day of each instance of placement if required by the placement provider.</p> <p>Students are expected to take full responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submitting their police check application</li> <li>• Maintaining a current police check</li> <li>• Safely storing their police check</li> </ul> <p>Please note, policies and procedures of placement agencies may differ from La Trobe University. The policy and procedure defined by the placement agency may take precedent over the above La Trobe University policy and procedure and this guideline during placement.</p>															
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<b>Definitions</b>	<p>For the purposes of these guidelines, the term ‘Placement(s)’ is used to describe any arrangement where a student is present, for educational purposes, in an environment that provides healthcare or related services to patients or the public, to practice specific clinical, professional, fieldwork or other skills as part of a health program or course requirement. It includes the allocation of a student to either an external organisation or the University’s internal clinics or Sports Centre.</p>															

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<b>Privacy requirements</b>	<p>La Trobe University is required to handle your personal details responsibly. The purpose for which the information is collected is to enable students to undertake placements.</p> <p>The University may disclose a student’s name, the fact that they have a satisfactory Police Check and the date it was obtained, to third parties where placements are undertaken. All handling of your police check is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the <a href="#">Victoria Police: Information Release</a> policy.</p>
<b>What is a National Police Check</b>	<p>A Police Check (also called a “National Criminal History Record Check” or “National Police Certificate”) is a national report prepared by the Australian Federal Police or by State or Territory police force or service that discloses evidence of whether a person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has been convicted of an offence;</li> <li>• Has been charged with and found guilty of an offence but discharged without conviction; or</li> <li>• Is the subject of any criminal charge still pending before a Court.</li> </ul>
<b>How to obtain a National Police Check</b>	<p>Victoria Police issues national police certificates for work, volunteering and occupation-related licencing and registration. An application for a national Police Check online or via post may be accessed via the Victoria Police (<a href="#">Apply for a National Police Check</a>) or from <a href="#">Fit2Work</a>.</p>
<b>Duration of validity</b>	<p>Police Checks are current only for the day on which they are issued. Students must obtain a National Police Check in the first year that placement is offered. The Department of Health <a href="#">Standardised Student Induction Protocol</a> stipulates that a Police Check is valid if ‘issued within the past three years or not more than six months prior to the commencement of the program of study whichever is later’.</p> <p>Some placement providers may also require students to hold National Police Checks with an issue date no greater than 3 or 6 months. Consequently, students may be required to obtain more than one National Police Check in a given academic year. Students will be informed by their discipline where this is the case.</p>
<b>Fees</b>	<p>Students are responsible for all associated costs incurred when obtaining a Police Check. Payment is made directly to the organisation undertaking the police check as part of the application process. La Trobe University will not act on behalf of students or accept payments in relation to National Police Checks.</p> <p>Application fees are set by the agencies conducting the police check. Victorian police check fees change on 1 July, every year, in accordance with the Victoria Police (Fees and Charges) Regulations 2014.</p> <p>As of 1 July 2023, the fee for a National Police check (name only) is \$52.50. The minimum turnaround time advertised for Police Checks is 10 working days, however in some instances applications can take up to 6 weeks.</p>

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	<p>Students should submit the application for a Police Check at least 6 weeks before the deadline advertised for their discipline for sighting a valid Police Check. More complex checks can take longer to process.</p> <p>In 2023 the fee for a Fit2Work check is \$24.90 excluding GST (this rate only applies to applications initiated by La Trobe University). The turnaround time is usually 1-2 days. The cost indicated above include the student discount. The cost indicated is subject to review by Fit2Work on an annual basis.</p>
<b>Providing evidence of your National Police Check</b>	<p>Prior to a student attending placement, the University's Partnership Operations is required to provide written confirmation to placement providers that they have sighted the Police Check of the student attending placement. Most agencies require the University to provide this advice 4 – 6 weeks prior to the placement being undertaken by the student and will not allow a placement to proceed unless the required documents have been sighted.</p> <p>Students are required to upload a copy of their Police Check to the Student Placement Management System (InPlace), prior to the discipline specific nominated timeframe. Individual disciplines will communicate with students about their discipline specific timeframes for Police Checks and final deadlines for submission.</p>
<b>Failure to present a National Police Check by discipline deadline</b>	<p>Placement allocations may not be confirmed for students that fail to present their National Police Check by the discipline deadline. Students that fail to comply with the discipline specific submission deadline will be withdrawn from placement.</p> <p>Due to the limited supply of placements the University cannot guarantee that a suitable alternative placement may be sourced for students that do not comply with the discipline deadline.</p>
<b>Disclosable outcomes</b>	<p>National Police Checks will include information based on guilty findings, matters currently under investigation and court hearings. It is important to note that a finding of guilt without conviction is still a finding of guilt and will be disclosed on the Police Check.</p> <p>A student whose Police Check shows that they have been convicted of murder or sexual assault or convicted of and sentenced to imprisonment for any other form of assault, is not permitted to work within an aged care service. For all other types of convictions, it is up to the agency to determine whether the individual is suitable.</p> <p>Students that have a disclosable outcome recorded on their Police Check should immediately seek advice from the Senior Manager, Partnership Operations, or discipline specific Clinical Coordinator about the implications to their placement. The Senior Manager, Partnership Operations or delegate will liaise with the HR Director (or closest equivalent position or delegate) within the placement provider organisation and confidentially discuss the student's case and whether proceeding with the planned placement is possible. The student will be de-identified in such cases. Clinical Educators or other staff involved with supervising students on placement are not informed of any cases where a student they are supervising may have a disclosable outcome</p>

	<p>on their Police Check.</p> <p>Although a disclosable outcome does not automatically prevent a student from attending placement, placement providers have the right to reject a student based on the outcome. The University cannot overturn this decision. Consequently, a student may have their progression halted at any instance of placement within the course.</p> <p>Where a student presents with a disclosable outcome on their Police Check, placement providers will take into consideration the seriousness and relevance of the conviction, the level of access the person has to care recipients and the length of time since the conviction.</p> <p>Should a placement provider refuse a student attending placement, the University will make reasonable attempts to source a suitable alternative placement. The University will consider that it has made reasonable attempts to find a suitable alternative placement if it has received rejections from three placement providers (however the number may be lower depending on availability of the placement type).</p> <p>Where reasonable attempts have been made and no suitable alternative placement can be sourced, students will be counselled by their discipline specific Clinical Coordinator on the most appropriate action. Students may be required to take a Leave of Absence from the course or reconsider their enrolment in the course.</p>
<p><b>Disclosable Outcomes for Prospective Students and Newly Enrolled Students</b></p>	<p>As the disclosable outcome may jeopardise a student's ability to successfully progress through a course (and obtain professional registration where applicable), individuals should consider the implication of any potential disclosable outcome against their name prior to applying for, or enrolling into, a course that has a placement component.</p> <p>Prospective applicants and newly enrolled students that may have a disclosable outcome against their name should seek advice from the discipline specific Course Coordinator to ensure that they do not incur learning debts where course completion and professional registration is unlikely.</p>
<p><b>Change in status</b></p>	<p>Any student that experiences a change in the status of their National Police Check, such as being investigated for, charged with, or found guilty of, a criminal offence, must immediately consult with the Senior Manager, Partnership Operations or their discipline specific Clinical Coordinator and may be required to obtain a new National Police Check. The new check will be at the expense of the student. A change in status may result in a student being withdrawn from placement.</p>
<p><b>Undertaking placements outside Victoria or Overseas and Residing outside of Victoria</b></p>	<p>Students that undertake interstate placements and students that reside outside of Victoria may be required to obtain a state or territory specific Police Check to undertake their placement.</p> <p>Students undertaking overseas placements will be required to comply with local regulations and requirements necessary to undertake placement within the country. Where applicable, students should consult with their discipline specific Clinical Coordinator at the time of arranging an overseas placement.</p>

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<b>National Police Checks for international students and students that have resided outside of Australia</b>	<p>Students that have resided overseas for more than 12 months in the past 10 years are required to provide a Police Check from the country of residence and/or statutory declaration that they have never been convicted of any crime.</p> <p>International students that have proof of an Australian residential address may apply for a National Police Check or Fit2Work Check. International students that cannot present proof of an Australian residential address may apply for a National Police Check through the Australian Federal Police (AFP).</p> <p>A digital National Police Check may be applied for online via the <a href="#">Australian Federal Police</a>. A downloadable application can also be found via the link above. A National Police Check costs \$42.00.</p> <p>Students applying for a National Police Check should allow a minimum of 15 working days from the date the application is received by the Australian Federal Police.</p> <p>Where a student obtains a National Police Check through the Australian Federal Police instead of via Victoria Police all other policies and process stated above apply.</p>
<b>Police Checks Obtained through Registering Bodies</b>	<p>Students may hold registration with an accrediting body where the registration includes an alternative form of a Police Check. The University cannot guarantee that a Police Check obtained through an accrediting body will be accepted by the placement provider as a suitable alternative to a National Police Check or Fit2Work Check, even if it is stated as being equivalent. For this reason, all students are advised to obtain a National Police Check or Fit2Work Check.</p>
<b>References</b>	<p><a href="#">DHS – Standardised Student Induction Protocol</a></p> <p><a href="#">DHAC – Police Certificate &amp; Worker Screening Requirements in Aged Care</a></p>
<b>Approval Body</b>	<p>Office of the Provost (Deputy Director, Partnerships)</p>
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<b>Contact Person</b>	<p>Senior Coordinator, Partnership Operations</p>