

**PLACEMENT OPERATIONS – HEALTH PLACEMENTS****FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – POLICE CHECK****Q: What is a police check?**

A: A Police Record 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:

- Has been convicted of an offence;
- Has been charged with and found guilty of an offence but discharged without conviction; or
- Is the subject of any criminal charge still pending before a Court.

**Q: Do I have to obtain a police check?**

A: Yes – all students must obtain a police check prior to the commencement of placement, and at the start of each subsequent year, 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 Placements Unit.

**Q: How long is a police check valid for?**

A: Police checks are current only for the day on which they are issued. For the purposes of placements, police checks need to be dated within the same year as the placement being conducted. Students should obtain a police check in the first year that placement is offered and at the start of each subsequent year.

Note: Some placement providers may also require students to hold police checks with an issue date no older than 3 or 6 months. As a consequence, students may be required to obtain more than one police check in a given academic year. Students will be informed by their discipline or Placement Officer where this is the case.

**Q: Can I use my police check from the previous year, as long as it is dated within 12 months?**

A: No – students are required to obtain a new police check in each year they undertake placements. For example, students who undertake placements in 2017 must have a police check dated in 2017.

**Q: I am an international student and/or have lived overseas for more than 12 months, do I need to provide a police check from the country I have previously lived in?**

A: Yes – 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.

**Q: Do I need to provide a police check each year from the country I have previously lived in?**

A: Students are only required to provide a police check from the country of residence and/or statutory declaration that they have never been convicted of any crime once, prior to the start of their first placements. However, should a student take a Leave of Absence from their course and live overseas for more than 12 months they will be required to submit an updated police check from the country of residence and/or statutory declaration that they have never been convicted of any crime prior to undertaking further placements.

**Q: How do I apply for an overseas police check?**

A: It is the student's responsibility to enquire with the country of residence's local authorities to find out how to obtain a police check.

**Q: How do I apply for an Australian police check?**

A: Depending on their residential address students can apply for a police check through either the Victorian Police [www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au), fit2work [www.fit2work.com.au](http://www.fit2work.com.au) or the Australian Federal Police [www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/services/criminal-records/national-police-checks](http://www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/services/criminal-records/national-police-checks).

- Students with a Victorian residential address can apply for a police check through either the Victorian Police [www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au) or through fit2work [www.fit2work.com.au](http://www.fit2work.com.au).
- Students with an Australian residential address outside of Victoria can only apply for a police check through fit2work [www.fit2work.com.au](http://www.fit2work.com.au).
- Students with an overseas address can apply for a police check through fit2work [www.fit2work.com.au](http://www.fit2work.com.au) or the Australian Federal Police [www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/services/criminal-records/national-police-checks](http://www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/services/criminal-records/national-police-checks).

**Q: Can I apply for a fit2work check even if I am a student from overseas or interstate?**

A: Yes – fit2work is available to all students from any State/Territory or country.

**Q: How do I apply for a Victorian police check?**

A: Download and complete the online application form from the Victorian Police website. Students that wish to obtain the discounted rate must have part of the form completed by a Placement Officer. See the "How do I obtain the Community Volunteer Fee (CVF) number for the Victorian Police check?" question for more information on how to do this. Students must then post their completed form, 100 points of certified identification and the fee to Victoria Police.

Full instructions on the Victorian Police process can be found here: [Procedure for police check applications](#).

**Q: How do I apply for a fit2work police check?**

A: Students will be sent an email by their Placement Officer with instructions on how to apply for a police check through fit2work. Students that wish to opt out of using fit2work will be given the

opportunity to do so at this point. Note: students that have placement commencing very early in the New Year must apply through fit2work as they require a police check quickly.

Once students have been given the opportunity to opt out the Placement Officer will send all consenting students' details to fit2work. fit2work will then send students an individual email with a link to complete their fit2work police check application.

Students will be required to complete an online application form, upload 100 points of certified identification and pay for the police check. In most cases this process is done in December the year prior to placement and fit2work will not process the check until January so that it is dated in the year of placement.

Instructions on the fit2work process can be found here: [fit2work police check – student process](#).

**Q: Can I get my 100 points of identification documents certified overseas for the fit2work application?**

A: Yes – fit2work will accept identification documents certified overseas as long as the certification is in English and meets the same standards as Australian certification as outlined in the fit2work police check – student process above.

**Q: Do my documents need to be recently certified?**

A: Yes – For fit2work documents must be certified within 3 months of the submission of the documents to fit2work.

**Q: How do I apply for an Australian Federal Police check (National Police Check)?**

A: Either complete the online application form or download the paper form to complete. Students must then either submit their completed application form, 100 points of certified identification and the fee via the online service or by post.

Full instructions on the Australian Federal Police process can be found here: [Australian Federal Police checks](#).

**Q: I haven't received an email invite to complete my police check through fit2work, what should I do?**

A: Students should advise their Placement Officer. The Placement Officer will arrange for the email to be sent again.

Note: The email is from Mercury group of companies who own fit2work. Please remember to check your junk and clutter mailboxes as emails from non La Trobe University organisations may be sent to either of these mailboxes.

**Q: Do I have to pay for the police check?**

A: Yes – students are responsible for all associated costs incurred when obtaining a police check. Payment is made directly to Victoria Police, fit2work or Australian Federal Police as part of the application process. La Trobe University will not act on behalf of students or accept payments in relation to police checks.

**Q: How much does a police check cost?**

A: Application fees for Victorian Police checks change on 1 July, every year, in accordance with the Victorian Police (Fees and Charges) Regulations 2014. The prices below were current as at 1 September 2016. Please check directly with the company providing the check for any updates to their prices.

Victorian Police check: Students applying for a police check through Victorian Police are eligible for a reduced fee as La Trobe University students qualify as volunteers for an authorised organisation. Students wanting to pay the reduced rate of \$17.30 must obtain the Community Volunteer Fee (CVF) number and signature from a Placement Officer.

Students who do not obtain the CVF number and signature will need to pay the full fee of \$46.00.

fit2work police check: Students applying for a police check through fit2work are eligible for a reduced fee if the student applies through a unique portal link that is emailed to them by the Mercury group of companies who own fit2work. Students will only receive this email when their application for a fit2work police check is initiated by a Placement Officer. Placement Officers will contact students towards the end of each year to arrange for this link to be sent to them. The reduced cost for students is \$19.70.

Students who complete a police check directly through fit2work without going through the emailed link will be charged the full price of \$39.90 + GST.

Australian Federal Police check: There is no reduced cost for students that apply for a police check through the Australian Federal Police. The cost is \$42.00.

**Q: How do I obtain the Community Volunteer Fee (CVF) number for the Victorian Police check?**

A: There are two ways to obtain the CVF number and signature from a Placement Officer.

- Students in Melbourne must take their application form to the ASK La Trobe Help Zone in the Bundoora campus library (Borchardt Library). An ASK La Trobe staff member will contact the Placements Unit and a Placement Officer will come to the library to fill in the CVF number and sign in Section E.
- Students based in Regional Victoria can post their completed form and a self-addressed reply paid envelope to the Regional Placements Unit – Regional Placements Unit, Clinical Teaching Building, La Trobe University, PO Box 199, Bendigo, VIC 3552. A Placement Officer will fill in the CVF number, sign Section E and return the form to the student. Students are then responsible for sending the form on to Victoria Police.

**Q: How long does it take to receive the completed police check?**

A: For Victorian Police checks the minimum turnaround time advertised for police checks is 10 working days, however in some instances applications can take up to 6 weeks. Students should submit the application for a police check 6 weeks before the clinical document due date for their discipline.

fit2work have a turnaround of 1-2 days for 80% of the police checks. Approximately 20% will require manual processing which can take 2-10 business days and approximately 5% of checks may take up to 20 business days to be returned. It is recommended students allow sufficient time to obtain a completed police check prior to the clinical document due date, should their application need to be processed manually.

National police checks through the Australian Federal Police may take a minimum of 15 working days from the date the application is received.

**Q: Do I have to upload my police check to InPlace?**

A: Yes – students are required to upload a copy of their police check to the Student Placement Management System, InPlace by the discipline specific deadline. Log in to InPlace and upload the police check in the “Notes/Docs” tab. Please ensure you use the following format when saving the document to InPlace – *<Current Year> <Name of document> <First Name Surname> <Student ID><Date Uploaded>* E.g. 2017 Police certificate – Jane Smith 1234567 – 15012017.

**Q: Do I need to upload a certified copy to InPlace?**

A: No – students are not required to upload a certified copy to InPlace. However, some placement providers require students to submit coloured certified copies prior to placement commencing. If the placement provider requests a certified copy of your police check you must comply – a black and white or colour photocopy will not be sufficient if they have requested a colour certified copy and the placement provider may refuse the student to attend placement if they don’t comply.

**Q: I am having trouble logging in to InPlace, can I email my police check to the Placement Officer?**

A: No – students must contact ASK La Trobe – 1300 LA TROBE (1300 52 87623) for any technical/IT difficulties.

**Q: When do I have to submit my police check by?**

A: Individual disciplines will communicate with students about their discipline specific timeframes for police checks and final deadlines for submission.

**Q: What if I don’t have my police check by the discipline specific deadline?**

A: Placement allocations may not be confirmed for students that fail to present their police check by the discipline deadline. Students that fail to comply with the discipline specific submission deadline will be withdrawn from placement.

Due to the cost and 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 for clinical documents. This may lead to a delay in the student's progression through the course.

**Q: Will my police check be shared with a placement provider?**

A: 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 Victoria Police: Information Release policy which is available at:

[http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media\\_ID=38447](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=38447)

**Q: What should I do if I have a disclosable outcome on my police check?**

A: Students that have a disclosable outcome recorded on their police check should immediately seek advice from the Senior Coordinator Placement Operations or discipline specific Clinical Coordinator about the implications. The Senior Coordinator Placement Operations or delegate will liaise with the HR Director (or equivalent position) within the placement provider organisation and discuss the student's case and whether proceeding with the planned placement is possible. The student will be de-identified in such cases.

**Q: Will my placement be cancelled if I have a disclosable outcome on my police check?**

A: 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 disclosable outcome.

Apart from aged care services (see question below) it is up to the agency to determine whether the individual student is suitable for placement. 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.

The final decision about whether a student can attend placement is with the placement provider. The University cannot overturn this decision. Consequently a student may have their progression halted at any instance of placement within the course.

**Q: Am I able to attend an aged care placement with a disclosable outcome?**

A: 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.

**Q: What if my placement is cancelled due to a disclosable outcome?**

A: Should a placement provider deny a student from 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 placements).

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.

**Q: Will my Supervisor / Clinical Educator be informed of my disclosable outcome?**

A: The Senior Coordinator Placement Operations will liaise with the HR Director (or equivalent position) of the placement provider regarding the disclosable outcome. While the University will de-identify students during this process there may be occasions when the placement provider is aware of who the student involved is. This may happen when there is only 1 student allocated to the placement or when the appropriate contact at the placement provider organisation which La Trobe liaise with is the Supervisor/Clinical Educator.

**Q: Do I need to take my police check with me to placement?**

A: Yes – students should take their police check with them on the first day of each instance of placement. Some placement providers may also require students to have their police check with them for every day of placement. Placement providers may send students home if they arrive at placement without a satisfactory police check.

**Q: I can't get my police check until the start of 2017 but the deadline for documents to be uploaded for my discipline is in 2016?**

A: Placement Officers are aware that students are not able to obtain a new police check until January which may be after the deadline for submission of clinical documents has passed. For those students that have a clinical document submission deadline of the year prior to placement (ie December 2016 and placement is in 2017) the Placement Officer will advise students of a separate deadline for uploading the police check. Please ensure you have obtained and uploaded the police check by this deadline. Students must upload all other documents (excluding the annual influenza vaccination) by the due date.

**Q: What do I do if I've lost my police check?**

A: Students that have lost or misplaced their police check will need to replace it. In some instances fit2work may be able to provide students with a new copy of their original police check. Students that have lost a Victorian Police check will need to obtain a new police check either through Victoria Police or fit2work.

**Q: What if something happens during the year and I'm concerned my status might change?**

A: Any student that experiences a change in the status of their police check, such as being investigated for, charged with, or found guilty of, a criminal offence, must immediately consult with the Senior Coordinator Placement Operations or their discipline specific Clinical Coordinator and may be required to obtain a new Police Record Check. A change in status may result in a student being withdrawn from placement.

**Q: Do I need to get a different police check if I have placement in a New South Wales?**

A: The majority of placement providers in NSW now accept fit2work police checks. Students that have a Victorian Police check may be required to apply for a new police check through fit2work if they have placement in NSW. Students will be informed by their discipline specific Placement Officer if they are required to apply for a different police check.

**Q: Do I need to get a new or different police check if I have placement in other States/Territories or overseas?**

A: Students that undertake interstate placements and students that reside outside of Victoria may be required to obtain a state or territory specific police check in order to undertake their placement. Students undertaking overseas placements will be required to comply with local regulations and requirements necessary to undertake placement within the country

Where applicable, students will receive further information from their discipline specific Placement Officer at the time of placement allocation and should consult with their discipline specific Clinical Coordinator at the time of arranging an overseas placement.

**Q: I have a police check through holding registration with an accrediting body, can I use this instead of obtaining a separate police check?**

A: La Trobe University cannot guarantee that a police check obtained through an accrediting body will be accepted as a suitable alternative to a Victorian Police check or fit2work police check by the placement provider even if it is recognised as being equivalent. Where an agency rejects the alternative check, students are required to obtain a Victorian Police check or fit2work police check.

**Q: Where can I find out more information?**

A: Please check La Trobe University's [Police Record Check Guidelines](#) for further information.

All La Trobe University documents on police check process and guidelines are also available on the SHE Placements Administration LMS page – [SHE Placements – College of SHE Placements](#)