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GUIDELINES VERSION: 3	
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WORKING WITH CHILDREN (WWC) CHECK

Overview	<p>All students attending professional, clinical or fieldwork placements must obtain a Working with Children (WWC) Check to attend placement. The WWC Check must be presented on the first day of each instance of placement.</p> <p>Students undertaking Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programs may also be required to obtain a WWC check subject to the requirements and/or placement provider.</p> <p>Students are expected to take full responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submitting their Working with Children application • maintaining a current Working with Children Check card • safely storing their Working with Children Check card <p>For more information, see La Trobe’s Working with Children Policy and Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working With Children Policy • Working With Children Students Procedures <p>Note, policies and procedures of placement agencies may differ from the University. The policy and procedure defined by the placement agency may take precedent over the above policy and procedure during placement.</p>												
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What is a Working with Children Check	<p>Under the Working with Children Act 2005, in 2006, the Victorian Government introduced a new checking system to help protect children under 18 years of age from physical or sexual harm.</p> <p>The Working with Children (WWC) Check creates a mandatory minimum checking standard across Victoria. The WWC Check helps to keep children safe by preventing those who pose a risk to the safety of children from working with them, in either paid or volunteer work.</p>												

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	<p>When assessing a Working with Children Check application, the Department of Justice and Community Safety will primarily consider the following offence types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serious sexual offences • serious violent offences • serious drug offences • relevant findings from prescribed professional bodies. <p>For more information, visit the Department of Justice and Regulation (Victoria) website: www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au</p>
How to Obtain a Working with Children Check	<p>Applications are submitted online at https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/onlineapplication.doj</p> <p>Applicants that have specified offences or relevant disciplinary findings against their name may be asked to provide further information to the Department of Justice and Community Safety to support their Working with Children Check application.</p> <p>Applicants that pass the Working with Children Check will receive a WWC Check card to confirm that they can undertake 'child related work'.</p>
Fees	A Working with Children Check for volunteers is free of charge.
Exemptions	<p>There are several situations listed in the <i>Working with Children Act 2005</i> where students doing child-related work are exempt and do not need a Working with Children Check (Check).</p> <p>The exemptions in the Act are described as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are a teacher who is currently registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), you are exempt from the Check. However, if your VIT registration is suspended or cancelled, you are no longer exempt and must apply for a Check. • If you are a Victoria Police Officer or an Australian Federal Police Officer, you are exempt from the Check. However, if you are suspended or dismissed from the police force, you are no longer exempt and must apply for a Check.
Providing Evidence of your Working with Children Check	Students are required to enter their WWC Check (WWCC) card reference to the student placement database – InPlace. Placement Officers will communicate with students about their discipline specific dates for the submission of Working with Children Check cards.
Failure to present a WWCC Card by the Deadline	Placement allocations are tentative subject to students presenting their WWCC card by the discipline deadline. Students that fail to comply jeopardise their ability to attend placement and cannot be allocated a placement until their WWCC card is sighted.

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	<p>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, and thus may prevent a student from meeting required components of their degree program.</p>
<p>Failing a Working with Children Check</p>	<p>If the Department of Justice and Community Safety is not satisfied that you should be given a WWCC card, you will be issued with an Interim Negative Notice then a Negative Notice. The Negative Notice comes into effect from the date on the notice.</p> <p>Any person that is issued with a Negative Notice by the Department of Justice and Community Safety cannot engage in child related work regardless of whether that work is directly supervised by another person.</p> <p>Any person issued with a Negative Notice cannot re-apply for a Working with Children Check until five years after the date of the Negative Notice unless there is a change to their status (e.g. the criminal conviction against their name is overturned).</p> <p>Where a student received a Negative Notice, the student will not be able to attend placements where they may undertake child related work.</p> <p>Students are required to present their WWCC Card at each instance of placement. The University cannot guarantee that suitable placements can be sourced for students that are issued with a Negative Notice. Consequently, a student may have their progression halted at any instance of placement within the course.</p> <p>Students that are issued with a Negative Notice should immediately seek advice from their discipline specific Clinical Academic Coordinator about the implications of the Negative Notice and 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>Failing a Working with Children Check for Prospective Students and Newly Enrolled Students</p>	<p>As a charge or guilty finding 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 charges or guilty findings against their name prior to applying for, or enrolling into, a course that has a clinical component.</p> <p>Prospective applicants and newly enrolled students that may have a relevant charges or guilty findings against their name should seek advice from the discipline specific Clinical Academic Coordinator to ensure that they do not incur learning debts where course completion and professional registration is unlikely.</p>

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	<p>For more information about disclosable outcomes, students visit www.justice.vic.gov.au or consult directly with the Department of Justice and Community Safety (Victoria).</p>
Change in Status	<p>Any student that experiences a change in the status of their WWC Check must immediately consult with their discipline specific Clinical Academic Coordinator. A change in status may result in a student being removed from a placement.</p> <p>You must notify the Office of the Provost, Partnership Operations Senior Manager, in writing if your circumstances change in any of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you are charged with, convicted, or found guilty of a serious sexual, violent or drug offence or the charge has been dealt with by a court in some way • a professional conduct report is made against you • you are required to report or comply with orders under: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Part 3 of the Sex Offenders Registration Act 2004</i> ○ <i>the Serious Sex Offenders Monitoring Act 2005</i> ○ <i>the Serious Sex Offenders (Detention and Supervision) Act 2009</i> <p>Students are also required to notify the Department of Justice and Community Safety within 21 days if there is any change to your volunteering or employment status. Failure to do so is an offence and incurs a penalty under the act. Students are required to notify the Department of Justice and Community Safety for any of the following changes to their personal details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change of name, address, or telephone number(s) • employer / volunteer organisation name and address • child related work codes <p>Students that hold a WWC Check at the time of enrolment (e.g., obtained as a part of previous employment) must inform the Department of Justice and Community Safety that they will be undertaking volunteer work with La Trobe University to ensure that their Working with Children Check card is valid for placement.</p>
Duration of Validity	<p>A WWCC is valid for 5 years unless it is revoked or suspended by the Department of Justice and Community Safety. Students must hold a valid WWCC for each instance of placement and it must not expire while on placement.</p>
Presentation of WWCC to the Placement Agency	<p>Students attending placement must be able to present their WWCC card on their first day of placement. Agencies have the right to remove a student from placement if they are unable to present a WWCC card and can prevent the student from attending until such time that the student can present a valid card.</p>
Undertaking Placements outside Victoria or Overseas	<p>Students that undertake interstate placements may be required to obtain a state specific WWC Check to undertake their placement. Where applicable, students will receive further information from their discipline specific Placement Officer at the time of placement allocation.</p>

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	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 at the time of placement allocation and should consult with their discipline specific Placement Officer at the time of considering an overseas placement.
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Owner	Partnership Operations, Office of the Provost
Contact Person	Senior Manager, Partnership Operations