

Policy Name:	UNIQUE STUDENT IDENTIFIER (USI) MANAGEMENT
Policy No.	E10.0
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Reviewed:	

Purpose

To summarise HITsa's use and management of learner personal information in relation to USIs.

Areas Affected

All learners who enrol to study at HITsa

Definitions

Identification - Generally speaking, an individual is 'identified' when, within a group of persons, he or she is 'distinguished' from all other members of the group. For the purposes of the Privacy Act, this will be achieved through establishing a link between information and a particular person.

Personal Identification – establishing the identity of an individual

Personal Information - The Privacy Act defines 'personal information' as:

'Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:
whether the information or opinion is true or not; and
whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.'

Unique Student Identifier (USI) - A USI is a learner's individual education number for life. It collates a record of the learner's vocational education and training (VET) undertaken in Australia. Learners at university, TAFE or doing other nationally recognised training all need a USI. Without one, the learner cannot receive Commonwealth financial assistance, qualifications or statements of attainment for completed studies - <https://www.usi.gov.au/>

General

As an RTO, collecting and reporting students' USI numbers is a requirement under Commonwealth legislation and a condition of registration. This applies to:

- new students
- pre-enrolled students
- continuing students
- school students completing nationally recognised training

HITsa must

- collect a USI from each student
- verify a USI supplied by a student
- ensure a student has a valid USI before issuing a qualification or statement of attainment for any nationally recognised training
- ensure the security of USIs and related documentation
- destroy any personal information which you have collected solely for the purpose of creating a USI on behalf of a student
- adhere to all USI legislative requirements

HITsa has developed an online enrolment form which requires USI entry as a compulsory field. A USI may be applied for by the student at time of enrolment if one is not currently held. Instructions are provided to the student on the enrolment form.

A USI cannot be used as an internal student identifier. At HITsa, JobReady creates default party IDs. USIs cannot be printed on qualifications and statements of attainment, student results or testamur documents.

Privacy

A student's privacy is protected under the Student Identifiers Act 2014 and the Privacy Act 1988.

A student must give permission to an authorised organisation to:

- create a USI on their behalf
- search for their USI
- view and/or update details on their USI account
- disclose their USI to another provider
- view their VET transcript

HITsa will obtain permission from the learner for any of these tasks if and when the need arises.

Creating a USI

To create a USI a student will need a valid form of Australian identification.

Acceptable forms of identification:

- Australian passport
- non-Australian passport (with Australian Visa)
- Australian birth certificate - please note: a birth certificate extract or commemorative birth certificate *will not be accepted*
- Australian driver's licence
- Medicare card
- certificate of registration by descent
- Centrelink concession card
- citizenship certificate
- ImmiCard

The USI Registry System uses the Documentation Verification Service (DVS) to verify student details using their identification. Copies of ID are not required to be uploaded. The information that appears on the card or document is entered, and the DVS will verify the student's identity automatically.

A record or copy of the student's ID is not retained on the system, but some personal information which may also appear on the identification card or document is retained by the Student Identifiers Registrar. Their privacy policy is available here - <https://www.usi.gov.au/about-us/privacy>

Requesting a USI on behalf of a Learner

There may be occasions where HITsa is requested by the learner to apply for a USI on his or her behalf.

The steps required to do this are summarized below –

1. obtain the student's permission to create a USI on their behalf -
2. ask the student to provide identification (refer "creating a USI" above for acceptable identification).
3. provide a privacy notice to the student, explaining how their personal information will be used.

Verifying a USI

HITsa does not require a student's permission to verify that their USI is correct. JobReady Student Management System has a USI verification process that is the tool used by HITsa to verify USIs.

Disclosing a student's USI or VET Transcript

HITsa must seek permission to disclose a student's USI and/or disclose or view a student's VET transcript to a third party.

VET transcripts include personal information. As such, VET transcripts must not be copied or disclosed to any other person without the student's consent.

USI is confirmation of student identity

From the RTO compliance point of view the confirmation of a student's identity is done through the USI system. Students are required to provide personal information (i.e. photo ID, address, medicare, etc) that is confirmed by the USI register. **RTOs are not required to maintain copies of students' ID on file (electronic or paper based), just to confirm that this evidence was sighted.** With this in mind, HITsa must still verify that the identification of the student presenting for enrolment matches the USI record provided on their enrolment form – they are one and the same.

Identification to confirm the match of individual and USI must be sighted by HITsa.

Confirmation of sighting of identification is completed by the RTO CoOrdinator (or other staff member) facilitating the learner's enrolment. Evidence of completion is done by documenting the identification document type observed, the document number, signature and date of the staff member sighting. This evidence will be saved in the student's party record in JobReady as part of the enrolment documentation.

More commonly, a student will enrol online, or HITsa will use the online enrolment process in lieu of paper forms. A photo of the student holding their photo identification is taken and uploaded. This is evidence of the student identification – student name matches that of the photo ID, and also the student identification on the USI record. No copies of this photograph are saved or stored anywhere but the student's party record in the student management system.

END

Date	Version	Amendment(s)
20.03.23		Original Document – Replaces HITP0063/4