



# Police clearance information for students in the Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

## Introduction

There has been increasing concern in the community regarding people in positions of trust abusing and misusing that trust to harm those in their care or for whom they are responsible in some way. The sexual, emotional and physical abuse and neglect of children (that is, people under the age of 18) and vulnerable adults is of particular concern. In response to these concerns, the Children's Protection Act (SA) and similar Acts across Australia have been revised and strengthened and this legislation requires organisations that provide services to children or vulnerable adults to establish policies and procedures which ensure a safe environment. As a result, many health care venues and all education venues (schools) are addressing this by policies which include police clearances for students prior to being accepted by the placement venue for field education.

To comply with the requirements of placement venues, all students of the School of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy who attend placements are required to have a National Police Certificate (NPC) every year. While the University's requirement is for a check once a year, some venues may require a more recent check. Details regarding the currency of a police check for a specific placement venue are normally available via the Student placement system or can be checked with your Field Education Office. Note that the University does not require you to obtain a police check as a condition of enrolment.

Students from other Divisions who enrol in School of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy courses where a field placement is requirement are required to have a police check. If in doubt, please contact the Field Education Office on 8302 4146.

Students who do not obtain a police check will be precluded from attending their field placement. Note that the process of obtaining a National Police Check may take some time and therefore apply as early as you can before your placement is due.

## Process for Obtaining a National Police Certificate (a Police Clearance)

1. **You will need to complete the application form**, by accessing one of the following links, as per the State that you reside in:

[ACT](#)    [NSW](#)    [NT](#)    [QLD](#)  
[SA](#)    [TAS](#)    [VIC](#)    [WA](#)

2. **Once you have received your NPC you will need to either:**

a. present the original NPC to the authorised officer in the Field Education office

or b. send a \*certified copy of the NPC, with a completed and signed Consent & Authority to Release Police Check Form to the authorised officer in the Professional Placement office. (\*A certified copy is a copy which either a solicitor, JP or police officer has marked as a true and accurate representation of the original, which they have sighted.)

3. **The Consent & Authority to Release Police Check Form** gives consent for the University to disclose the information on the NPC to the host Field Education placement.

4. **If no offence is listed on your NPC**, you are able to commence your field education placement.

5. **If an offence is listed on your NPC** the University will contact the host placement provider. *The placement provider will make a decision on whether you can undertake the field education placement with the organisation.* UniSA is not involved in assessing the risk disclosed on the NPC or approving the placement. Once the result of the assessment is received by the University, you will be contacted regarding whether the placement provider has given its approval for you to commence your field education placement. Being cleared by one placement venue does not automatically clear you for another and you must present your NPC for assessment for any new placement.

6. **Record Keeping:** It is important that you retain the original of your NPC for your own records. The Field Education Office will retain the NPC. If an offence is disclosed on your NPC, the copy of the NPC cannot be held by us for longer than 6 months, after which it will be destroyed. Your details will also be recorded on the Student Placement System confirming that you have submitted an NPC, and been Cleared or Not Cleared, as the case may be.

7. **Duration of currency for the NPC:** The School of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy requires your NPC to remain current for a 12 month period only, and must remain current for the duration of your placement.



## International Students

If you have been in Australia for a period longer than 12 months, international students are required to have a National Police Check, please follow the procedure outlined above.

If you have recently arrived in Australia, you are required to present your passport and visa to the Field Education Office.

## Appeals

If you are precluded by a placement organisation because of a disclosed risk on your NPC, most venues have an appeal mechanism. You should contact your Program Director if you are refused access to a venue. If you believe that you have been unreasonably disadvantaged by the requirement for a police check, or by any part of the process, please put your concerns in writing to:

Director: Student and Academic Services  
University of South Australia  
GPO Box 2471, Adelaide

## Authorised Officers

It is important that your National Police Certificate (NPC) is viewed by a staff member authorised to receive it.

If you are posting your certified copy of your NPC, please send to:

**Field Education Support Officer**  
UniSA, School of Psychology, Social Work & Social Policy  
Magill GPO Box 2471  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

If you are presenting the NPC in person, the Field Education Support Officer is located in:

H1-35  
Amy Wheaton Building  
Magill Campus

Enquiries: 8302 4146