

WORKING WITH CHILDREN & VULNERABLE PEOPLE PROCEDURE

Responsible Officer:	General Manager
Approved By:	General Manager
Approval Date:	13/06/2025
Review Date:	13/06/2026

1. Purpose and Scope

The Tasmanian University Student Association (TUSA) is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and supportive workplace for all people, and especially for children and vulnerable people.

This procedure informs TUSA's employees, student representatives, volunteers and third-party contractors of their responsibilities and the procedures they must follow when working or volunteering with children and vulnerable people through holding a current registration or police check where required through their roles.

Registrations to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP) and National Police Record Checks aim to reduce the potential for sexual, physical, psychological, emotional or financial harm or neglect of children and vulnerable people.

This procedure applies to all TUSA employees, student representatives, volunteers and third-party contractors engaged in any activity in connection with TUSA.

2. Definitions

Child or young person - means any person under the age of 18 years. Vulnerable people - are individuals who, due to factors such as age, disability, cultural background, financial hardship, or personal circumstances, may be at greater risk of harm, or exploitation. Registration to Work with Vulnerable People – refers to the screening process including a background check and a risk assessment to make sure a person is suitable to work or volunteer in organisations that have contact with children or vulnerable people.

3. Key Requirements

3.1. Overview

TUSA does not tolerate any inappropriate treatment or abuse of children and vulnerable people and commits to employing best practices to provide safe physical and online environments to mitigate any foreseeable risk and protect children and vulnerable people from harm.

3.2. Checks

TUSA employees, student representatives, volunteers and third parties contracted by TUSA are required to provide verification to TUSA of the outcomes of the below approvals/checks when it is determined to be mandatory for their role. Completion of the registration process is required to occur before their role with TUSA commences:

- a. The TUSA employee, student representative, volunteer or third party contracted by TUSA must obtain a RWVP where the role includes anticipated direct one-on-one contact with children or vulnerable people or as reflected in their Position Description.
- b. A National Police Check where TUSA has determined it is required for the role as reflected in the Position Description.

A RWVP is different from a National Police Record Check. A RWVP is an ongoing assessment of a person's eligibility to work with vulnerable people. A National Police Check, on the other hand, is a point-in-time check providing a list of criminal history information at the time of the check.

A RWVP is valid for 5 years and is compulsory for people working in certain child-related and vulnerable people related roles in Tasmania. TUSA requires an updated National Police Check every 5 years.

3.3. Registration to Work with Vulnerable People

The following steps are required to obtain a RWVP:

- Complete the online application form through The Department of Justice at <https://wwwforms.justice.tas.gov.au/Apply/ApplicationStart.aspx>
- Attend a Service Tasmania Outlet to verify individual identity, have a photo taken, and pay the application fee.
- The application will be assessed and processed, and if successful the applicant will be issued with the appropriate assessment notice and registration card.
- Checks may take up to six weeks to be approved hence prompt completion of the application is desirable.

When applying for a RWVP, there are only three possible outcomes:

- **Successful (without conditions)** Registration to Work with Vulnerable People;

- **Successful (with conditions)** Registration to Work with Vulnerable People; or
- **Refusal** of a Registration to Work with Vulnerable People.

All outcomes must be reported to the relevant manager for review.

Employees, student representatives, volunteers and third parties contracted by TUSA must notify the Department of Justice and TUSA in writing within 7 days if:

- They are charged with, convicted, or found guilty of a sexual, violent or drug offence or the charge has been dealt with by a court; or
- A professional conduct report is made against them.

Expiry and Renewal

- Renewals must be obtained prior to the expiry of a valid RWVP.
- TUSA will notify the employee, student representative, or volunteer prior to the expiration of the RWVP. Individuals will receive a reminder via email 60 days prior to the registration expiry date. Individuals should ensure their email in their record is correct to enable the reminder notification to be received.
- Once a renewal of registration has been applied and paid for online, approval is instant unless a new application is required.
- A new application is required if renewal is not sought within 30 days after expiry, in which case approval may take a further six weeks. Should a renewal be required for a position and the individual does not provide this, the matter will be referred to the General Manager for appropriate action to be taken.
- Should an individual's circumstances change including, but not limited to, a criminal investigation, charge, offence, finding of guilt or record, they are required to notify the General Manager within 14 business days of the date of the charge or offence.

Payment of fees

If obtaining a RWVP is an essential requirement within an individual's Position Description, responsibility for payment will sit with TUSA. For all other positions, the responsibility will sit with the individual. Payment can be made online or in person at a Service Tasmania Outlet.

Exemptions from a RWVP

TUSA employees, student representatives, volunteers and third parties contracted by TUSA may be exempt from obtaining a RWVP if; working or volunteering with children or vulnerable people for 7 days or less per calendar year, or the individual holds a current interstate registration and wishes to use it in Tasmania for 28 days or less per year. The 7 days or less exemption is based on days not hours. Per day includes one event in a day. That is, one hour for an activity is allocated day as one (1) day.

TUSA employees, student representatives, volunteers and third parties contracted by TUSA should check with TUSA management regarding potential exemption eligibility.

3.4. National Police Record Checks

Process of applying for a National Police Record Check

There are three steps to apply for a National Police Record Check:

1. Download the application form (Consent to check and release a National Police Certificate) or request a form at any Service Tasmania Service Centre.
 2. Fill in the required details.
 3. Submit form and provide identification at Service Tasmania.
- A National Police Record Check will only be conducted once an application form has been completed, appropriate identification provided, and relevant fees paid.
 - All required documents must be taken to a Service Tasmania Service Outlet.

A copy of a completed National Police Check is to be provided to TUSA immediately following application. .

Processing timeframes are:

- National Police Certificate with a **No Record** result has an average turnaround time of 5 days
- National Police Certificate with a **Record** result has an average turnaround time of 10 days.

All outcomes must be reported to the relevant manager for review.

Employees, Student Representatives, volunteers and third parties contracted by TUSA must notify the Department of Justice and TUSA in writing within 7 days if:

- They are charged with, convicted, or found guilty of a sexual, violent or drug offence or the charge has been dealt with by a court; or
- A professional conduct report is made against them.

Payment of fees

If obtaining a National Police Record Check is an essential requirement within the individual's Position Description, responsibility for payment will sit with TUSA. For all other positions, the responsibility will sit with the individual. Payment can be made online or in person at a Service Tasmania outlet.

Expiry and Renewal

- Renewals must be obtained prior to the expiry of a valid National Police Record Check.
- TUSA will notify the employee, student representative, volunteer or third party contracted by TUSA prior to the expiration of the National Police Record Check.
- Individuals will receive a reminder via email up to 60 days prior to the registration expiry date. Individuals should ensure their email in their record is correct to enable the reminder notification to be received.
- Once an updated National Police Record Check is received, a copy is to be provided to TUSA prior to the expiry date on record.
- Should an individual's circumstances change including, but not limited to, a criminal investigation, charge, offence, finding of guilt or record, they are required to notify the General Manager within 14 business days of the date of the charge or offence.

3.5. Failure to comply

Any TUSA employee, student representative, volunteer or third party contracted by TUSA who does not hold and maintain the relevant checks under this procedure, where it is determined as necessary for their role or engagement with TUSA, will not be able to undertake duties in their allocated role until the required checks are obtained. See section 4 of this procedure for possible administrative action.

4. Responsibilities

TUSA employees, student representatives, volunteers and third parties contracted by TUSA are responsible for complying with all applicable laws, regulations and TUSA governance instruments.

As well as:

- Applying for and/or renewing checks as required and providing proof of current registration.
- Nominating TUSA as an employer within the employment or volunteer section of the check application, and updating an existing RWVP
- Ensuring the employer section of the registration is kept up to date if any changes to employment status arises (e.g. resignation).
- Immediately notifying their manager when an application or renewal is rejected or revoked.
- Informing their manager if there is a change to their background or criminal history that may affect their authorisation to perform their role (e.g. criminal charge or record).
- Informing their manager upon receiving a suspended registration, proposed negative notice or conditional check or any other change to their registration status.
- Informing their manager if aware or suspect on reasonable grounds, that a registered TUSA employee, student representative, volunteer or third party contracted by TUSA has or may have engaged, in behaviour that poses a risk of harm to a vulnerable person.

Managers are responsible for:

(All managers) must ensure the following requirements are met.

- Where determined as mandatory for their role with TUSA that all employees, volunteers, contractors, external providers, work experience placements and any other person have a current RWVP and National Police Record Check.
- Reporting any suspected reportable behaviour to the General Manager.
- Reviewing individual's status via the Department of Justice website to ensure current registration.
- Monitoring upcoming expiring checks.
- Ensuring appropriate risk assessment and mitigation strategies are in place to mitigate risk of harm to children in circumstances where a person who has incidental contact with children, and does not have the required checks in place,
- Managing any non-compliance with this procedure.
- Ensuring TUSA employees, student representatives, volunteers and third parties contracted by TUSA are trained in line with the requirements of this procedure.

5. Sanctions in the event of a breach of this procedure

TUSA may take disciplinary action against any TUSA employee, student representative, volunteer or third party contracted by TUSA who are found to have breached this procedure. If there is a breach, the individual will be referred to the TUSA General Manager for review and managed under applicable TUSA policies.

The disciplinary action may include:

- Further training on the requirements for safeguards around working with children and vulnerable people and the requirements of this procedure.
- Subject to operational requirements, redeployment to other duties where the checks are not required.
- Suspension from duty pending further review of the matter.
- Written warnings with further sanctions.
- Termination of the employment or engagement of the worker with or without notice depending on the severity of the matter.

6. Relevant Documentation

TUSA employees, student representatives, volunteers and third parties contracted by TUSA are encouraged to read this procedure in conjunction with other relevant documentation, as detailed below.

TUSA governance instruments:

- TUSA Workplace Expectations Policy
- TUSA Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- TUSA Grievance Policy
- TUSA Code of Conduct Statement
- TUSA Personal Information Protection Statement

UTAS governance instruments:

- UTAS Child Safety Code of Conduct

Government legislation:

- Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas)

7. Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually, or as needed. Any amendments deemed necessary will be approved by the General Manager.

8. Versioning

TITLE	PARA. AMENDED	APPROVAL DATE
Working with Children & Vulnerable People Procedure	Reviewed	01/04/2024
Working with Children & Vulnerable People Procedure	Reviewed	