

Frequently Asked Questions

Working with Children Checks - FAQs

What is a Working with Children Check (or equivalent)?

A Working with Children Check (WWC Check) or its equivalent is an assessment of your suitability for child-related work in the context of direct-contact activities. This 'screening' of individuals is intended to help protect children from being exposed to harm. Children are considered to be anyone under the age of 18.

There is no single national system setting out the requirements for obtaining a Working with Children Check (WWC Check) or its equivalent. Each State and Territory has their own legislative requirements (except Tasmania) and it is necessary to fulfil the requirements in the jurisdiction in which you are working or studying (for international students, this is the State in which you are enrolled).

Do I need a WWC Check (or equivalent)?

Any person over the age of 18 enrolling into a course that has a clinical/practicum component that may require them to come into 'direct contact' with children requires a WWC Check or its equivalent unless exempt. In Queensland, students of **any age** enrolling into a course that has a clinical/practicum component that may require them to come into direct contact with children requires a WWC Check or its equivalent. Each Australian State and Territory requires people who are likely to engage in direct-contact activities with children throughout the period of their employment or studies to undergo a Working with Children Check (WWC Check) or its equivalent.

If you are enrolling in the Bachelor of Health Science, regardless of specialisation, unless exempt you will require a WWC Check (or equivalent). Refer to the '[Admission Requirements – Endeavour College of Natural Health](#)' section of the [Admissions Policy – Undergraduate – Higher Education](#) and the [Exemptions](#) section of this document.

Students are required to hold the type of Check that is relevant to their current enrolment. E.G.: If you are enrolled to study in NSW, you require a NSW issued WWC Check and you are required to attend clinical/practicum subjects at a NSW campus. Should you hold a WWC Check (or equivalent) for a jurisdiction other than the one in which you are enrolled to study, you are required to obtain or transfer to the type of WWC Check (or equivalent) required by your local jurisdiction.

Some jurisdictional authorities require WWC Check cards to be surrendered once the card holder is no longer performing child-related work in that State. I.E.: If you change work conditions or move interstate.

Students should be aware that maintaining a WWC Check or equivalent may be a requirement of their employment post-graduation if intending to practice on children or be employed in direct contact with children activities unless an exemption applies.

What happens if I don't present a valid WWC Check (or equivalent) to the College within the required timeframe?

You will be excluded from clinic practicums and this can impact any assessable attendance/participation requirements resulting in a fail grade. If a valid WWC Check or equivalent is not presented and validated/verified and recorded by the College within the timeframes specified in the [Working with Children Checks Policy](#) your enrolment will be cancelled by the College.

Remain mindful that the College monitors the status of recorded WWC Checks (or its equivalent) **during teaching periods**. If your WWC Check or equivalent expires throughout a teaching period you will be excluded from clinical practicums after the expiry date.

How much will it cost?

The cost varies depending on which State or Territory you are enrolled in. For some jurisdictions the WWC Check or its equivalent is free and in others a fee may be charged by the State Authority. Refer to the jurisdictional information in the [Application Process](#) section of this document for links to exact fees or contact your State Authority.

Am I required to pay for my own WWC Check (or equivalent)?

Students requiring a WWC Check or equivalent are responsible for the initial and ongoing costs associated, including renewal. Payments are made directly to the relevant State Authority as part of the application and renewal processes. These application and renewal fees are not covered by or included in your tuition fees or FEE-HELP.

What if I don't want to treat children or don't want to apply for a WWC Check (or equivalent)?

Each Australian State and Territory requires people who are likely to engage in direct-contact activities with children throughout the period of their employment or studies to undergo a Working with Children Check (WWC Check) or its equivalent. Direct contact means physical, face-to-face, written, oral or electronic contact.

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As part of your clinical/practicum components, you will be exposed to persons under the age of 18 (and them to you) as you perform a range of different activities. **Holding a valid WWC Check or its equivalent is a condition of enrolment** for all Bachelor of Health Science courses, regardless of your specialisation unless exempt.

Also refer to *I have a previous criminal conviction. How does that impact my application?*

How long is a WWC Check (or equivalent) valid for?

Each State and Territory has different periods of currency ranging from 12 months to five years, unless a WWC Check or its equivalent is revoked earlier by the relevant authority. For example, in WA the National Police Certificate (NPC) is required to be renewed on an annual basis. Refer to the [Working with Children Checks Policy](#) for periods of currency by State / Territory.

How do I apply and what do I need for a WWC Check (or equivalent)?

To apply you will need to: complete and submit the relevant application form; pay any associated application fees; and satisfy proof of identity (POI) requirements.

Many States now offer an online POI verification service. If you are unable to successfully verify your POI using these online services, alternatives are provided for extenuating circumstances.

In most cases your POI documents must be originals and not copies. In instances where the College is required by law to physically sight your documents they must be **originals** or **certified true copies**. (Uncertified) photocopies, scans, photos will **not** be accepted in these circumstances. If you don't have the required POI documents to support your application, you will be required to obtain them at your own cost.

Refer to the [Application Process](#) section at the back of this document for the process relevant to your State or Territory.

Do I have to renew my WWC Check (or equivalent)?

Yes. You are obligated under the [Working with Children Checks Policy](#) to maintain the currency of your WWC Check or its equivalent throughout the term of your enrolment with the College.

Refer to: *What happens if I don't present a valid WWC Check (or equivalent) to the College within the required timeframe?*

How far in advance do I need to renew my expiring WWC Check (or equivalent)?

Enrolled students that hold a WWC Check or equivalent with an approaching expiration date of **six months or less** should check with Student Services Staff when renewal is required. Some jurisdictions require you to renew at this 'six months to go' milestone whilst others require anywhere from 2-6 months. Keep in mind that State Authorities experience peak processing periods at certain times during the calendar year and this can lengthen processing times.

What happens if it expires during my enrolment?

Under the [Working with Children Checks Policy](#), you:

- are obligated to maintain the currency of your WWC Check or equivalent throughout the entire term of your enrolment;
- are required to renew your WWC Check or equivalent **before** it expires to ensure currency is maintained; and
- must notify the College immediately if your WWC Check or equivalent expires or is revoked by the relevant authority.

Refer to *'What happens if I don't present a valid WWC Check (or equivalent) to the College within the required timeframe?'* and *'What happens if I fail to renew it?'*

What happens if I fail to renew it?

You are legally obligated to notify the College. The College is legally obligated to prevent you from participating in clinical practicums. You will be excluded from clinic practicums and this can impact any assessable attendance/participation requirements for your enrolled subjects resulting in a fail grade. If a valid WWC Check or equivalent is not presented to and verified/validated by the College within the timeframes specified in the [Working with Children Checks Policy](#) your enrolment will be cancelled by the College.

How do I renew it?

Most States and Territories prefer that this is performed online and renewal fees may apply. Refer to your State Authority for the process relevant to your type of WWC Check or equivalent. Links to State Authorities are listed in the [Working with Children Checks Policy](#) for your convenience.

NOTE: South Australian students should refer to Student Services as they cannot initiate this process themselves.

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I have a previous criminal conviction. How does that impact my application?

Not all criminal convictions disqualify a person from applying for a WWC Check or equivalent, however it is against the law for a disqualified person to apply for a WWC Check or equivalent. To find out if you have been disqualified or if your previous history could impact your application please contact your relevant State Authority and discuss your concerns. Links to all State Authorities are listed in the College's [Working with Children Checks Policy](#) for your convenience.

If an applicant knows of any reason why they will not pass a Working with Children Check or equivalent, they should not apply for entry to the College's courses that require a WWC Check or equivalent.

Students who are not able to produce or maintain a successful WWC Check or equivalent will not be able to complete any qualification at the College that has a practicum component requiring them to be able to practice on children. In these instances, the student is unable to meet the requirements for course completion and the College will immediately cancel their enrolment in the course. Students may apply for enrolment in the College's other courses that do not require a WWC Check or its equivalent.

I have another question not answered here - where else can I get information?

We recommend that you talk to us. Please contact the College in writing via email to WWCChecks@endeavour.edu.au. Firstly, it's likely we can point you in the right direction depending on the type of information you are seeking, and secondly we may be able to add more information to this document which may help fellow students. Alternatively, links to all State Authorities are listed in the College's [Working with Children Checks Policy](#) for your convenience.

Exemptions

How does the College manage exemptions?

In each instance that a WWC Checks (or its equivalent) is required by the College, and an exemption applies to that student, the student must provide evidence that supports their exemption. This 'equivalent' evidence is received by the College's Student Services Staff, and it shall be verified/validated by the College's Compliance department, with details of the exemption evidence recorded in the student's file much the same as though it were an actual WWC Check. The details of the evidence including the expiry date shall be utilised for monitoring and reporting purposes and managed as an equivalent to a WWC Check expiry date, **therefore requirements for renewal of evidence prior to expiry apply as do potential exclusion outcomes.**

What exemptions apply?

There are a variety of exemptions with some applying nationally and others only applicable to a particular State or Territory. In instances where an exemption applies, **you may be legally obligated to apply for the exemption** - it is not necessarily automatically granted due to your individual circumstance. Contact your local jurisdictional authority/agency for current advice and refer to the [Working with Children Check Policy](#) for possible exemptions and links to jurisdictional guidance.

If you believe you are eligible for an exemption not outlined in the Policy we encourage you to contact your local jurisdictional authority/agency for current advice and the College, in writing at WWCChecks@endeavour.edu.au to discuss your individual circumstances.

Frequently Asked Questions Application Process

How do I apply in New South Wales?

Students are required to first apply online via the [Working with Children Check webpage](#): part of the Office of the Children's Guardian website. Here students are required to click on the "Apply for your Check" link, and complete the [online application](#) ensuring the name entered matches identity document/s exactly. Following submission of the online application form, students will receive an 'APP number' (application number). Once received, the student is required to take the APP number to the [RMS](#) or [Service NSW agency](#) in person and provide [Proof of Identity \(POI\)](#). As a student over 18 on professional placement, the Check is free. The Check will be undertaken by the Office of the Children's Guardian and the student should receive a WWC number that they are to pass on to the College for verification and College records. There is **no certificate, hard copy or card issued**. Successful applicants receive a WWC number, which is valid for five years (unless revoked) and is to be verified/validated by the College via Student Services and recorded.

For more information the NSW Government provides a 6-7 minute [how to apply video](#) to guide applicants through the process. Service NSW provides WWC Check application information [here](#).

How do I apply in Northern Territory?

The Working with Children Clearance or 'Ochre Card' required for students in NT is to be applied for online via '[Apply for a new Working with Children Clearance](#)', however students should visit the '[Before you Apply](#)' webpage to prepare all requirements prior to applying as the application must be completed in a single unbroken online session. Successful applicants will receive their Ochre Card and this is to be presented to the College via Student Services for verification/validation and recording.

How do I apply in Queensland?

Students of all ages require a WWC Check if completing clinical placement. For guidance on the process refer to the [Blue card process for new employees](#) which includes students. The Blue card application (BC) form is to be completed by students. At the time this document was written, there was no payment required for student type applications. Ensure hard-copy forms are marked as valid for lodgement until 30 June 2018 as previous iterations are no longer accepted by Blue Card Services.

Students should visit the Blue Card Services website where they can familiarise themselves with the process and its requirements:

- Students shall ensure they are not a [disqualified person](#).
- Students shall complete Part D of a [Blue card application \(BC\) form](#) then provide this to the College via Student Services.
- Proof of Identity (POI) is required as stated in Part E on the application form.

The College is required to sight and check **two current, original** identification documents (showing the student's full legal name, date of birth and signature) in one of two set combinations. If the required POI combinations cannot be provided, the application form states alternative requirements that must be met for an application to proceed.

The College is required to complete Parts A-C, and E-F of the application form, and irrespective of whether the 'organisation's representative' can sight the identification, the College representative must:

- Warn the applicant that it is an offence for a [disqualified person](#) to sign a blue card application: and
- Complete Part F in its entirety as a representative of the College.

Once the form is complete, Student Services staff may assist the student with electronic lodgement e.g.: by scan or fax. Application lodgement details are stated on the application form and provide for varying methods. The College shall take copies of all related documents and store these in the student's file. Students successful in their application shall receive their Blue Card via post and this must be presented to Student Services for verification/validation and recording.

How do I apply in South Australia?

When a SA student needs to apply for a WWC Check, the College is responsible for initiating the application: students are unable to request screening directly from the DCSI Screening Unit. The student's full legal name, date of birth and email address are required to initiate an application request. Students shall contact Student Services to request their WWC Check. Student Services Staff, as nominated Requesting Officers shall initiate the application process via the DCSI Screening Unit organisational portal.

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Students shall receive electronic login details for the portal via email. Once this is received the student must login **within 72 hours of receiving the email to activate their account**, complete and submit their application form online ensuring all requirements are met including POI (Proof of Identity) verification and payment of fees. Refer to the DCSI Screening website's [Fees](#) page for current screening fees and charges.

There are 3 options available to students as to how they have their identity verified. Students should choose the most appropriate option, based on the identity documents they hold and their individual circumstances. The options are:

1. Online verification using the Australian Government's [Documentation Verification Service](#). Applicants must have a current Australian driver's licence AND a current Australian passport (or alternatively, an Australian Birth Certificate/Citizenship Certificate) to use this option.
2. Applicant produces documents to the College's 'Verifying Officer' (Campus Manager - Adelaide) who then completes the verification process online: [How to verify an applicant's identity](#). (Students should make an appointment via Student Services to complete this option).
3. Applicant prints the application form and takes relevant documentation to an independent 'Verifying Officer' (not affiliated with the College). This option is available where [exceptional circumstances](#) can be demonstrated or the special provisions, outlined on the DCSI Screening website, apply. As of 1 December 2016, the College should contact the DCSI Screening Unit to obtain an application form for this purpose, and then submit it by post once completed. The name and **original** signature of the Verifying Officer must be on all paper application forms submitted to the DCSI Screening Unit.

Once screening has been completed, the DCSI Screening Unit shall notify both the applicant and the College of the outcome. The College's Authorised Officer shall record the details within the SMS student's file.

How do I apply in Victoria?

Students undertaking practical training as part of an educational course are required to apply for an Employee type check (not Volunteer). Students are required to fill in the [application form](#) and verify their identity online. Following this, students can expect to receive an email containing instructions on how to finalise their application at an Australia Post outlet. The instructions for applicants that successfully verified their Proof of Identity (POI) documents online will differ to the instructions for applicants that were not able to successfully verify their POI documents online. Students are required to attend an Australia Post outlet, have their photo taken (at no extra cost) and pay the application fee. For applications made within Victoria the cost is reduced compared to applying for a Victorian WWC Check from another state.

If you pass the Check you will receive a confirmation email. Successful applicants should receive their card approximately two weeks after the Check has been completed. The card is to be presented to the College via Student Services for verification/validation and recording.

For more information the Victorian Government provides a 2-3 minute [short video](#) to guide applicants through the process.

How do I apply in Western Australia?

Whilst WWC Checks are available for some occupations and volunteers in Western Australia, the Working with Children Screening Unit has advised that our College students don't meet the eligibility criteria to apply. As such, in WA relevant students must apply for a National Police Certificate (NPC) and have this certificate renewed each year for the period of their employment/studies with the College to ensure the ongoing safety of children on College premises. Refer to the Western Australia Police website's [Information Access Fees](#) page for current NPC charges.

Applications can be made online or in person at participating Australia Post outlets. Online applications now include online payment, Proof of Identity (POI) verification and delivery. Applications that do not require any further investigation can be completed within an hour. The [National Police Certificate application form](#) will open on an external website.

Alternatively, in person applications can be made at a participating Australia Post outlet which require a [100 point POI](#) verification. In person applications and those which require further investigation from the online portal will be issued a physical NPC. Please allow a minimum of 15 working days to pass before contacting the WA Police for follow up. Please note only NPC certificates showing no criminal history can be provided electronically (otherwise a paper version will be sent to applicants automatically). Student Services staff shall record the NPC details within the SMS student file.

For any further WWC Check related queries please write to the College at:

WWCChecks@endeavour.edu.au