SMS VENDOR FACT SHEET

Release 8.0 *Unique student identifier* validation

Unique student identifier validation changed under release 8.0. Previously, under release 7.0, blank values in the *Unique student identifier* field would trigger:

- one **error** (3864 — where a certificate/statement of attainment for a nationally recognised program had been issued)
- numerous **warnings** (against all nationally recognised programs and subjects).

The validation was written to only produce an error where a unique student identifier (USI) was required in line with the Student Identifiers Act 2014. This legislation states that a USI must be collected by all registered training organisations (RTOs) before issuing VET statements of attainment or VET qualifications to any student, unless exempt (see the USI Office's exemption table).

As the coverage of USI information is expected to be more complete from January 2018, validation has been written to consider the number of blank USIs across the submission.

Updated USI validation in AVS

The release 7.0 warnings on blank USIs have been removed under release 8.0.

The existing error (3864) remains, with a new error (4744) introduced (replacing the removed warnings) which triggers when the data submitter reports a percentage of clients with blank USIs, but they are actually eligible for a USI (as they're undertaking nationally recognised training, listed on training.gov.au).

This validation rule will trigger as an error when the submission has at least 100 eligible clients without a USI and the calculated missing USI percentage exceeds an agreed value. In all other scenarios, where blank USIs exist for eligible clients, the validation rule will trigger as a warning and validation warnings do not prevent submission of data via the AVETMISS validation software (AVS).

The agreed percentage value, while based on historic trends, is subject to change as directed. Due to this, the exact percentage value will not be communicated outside of NCVER or within error messages.

When can a USI be blank?

There are very few scenarios where the *Unique student identifier* field should be blank in an AVETMISS submission. Exempt eligible clients — international offshore clients and those accessing an individual exemption — must use the appropriate exemption code listed in *AVETMISS data element definitions: edition 2.3*.

If the RTO is withholding a student's VET statement of attainment or VET qualification, as the student hasn't supplied their USI, this activity must still be submitted to the National VET Provider Collection. This is the only scenario under which a submission should include blank USIs.

As it is common practice and recommended (such as in the National VET data policy) for RTOs to collect USIs from students when they enrol, it is expected that this situation will occur less frequently. Where an RTO is continually failing validation due to having too many blank USIs, the RTO should call NCVER's Client Support team to discuss their situation.

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Expectation of SMS vendors

While there is no expectation for SMS vendors to code this new validation rule into their system, we encourage SMS vendors to assist RTOs with meeting their compliance needs by, where possible:

- drawing RTOs' attention to blank USIs, particularly where a VET statement of attainment or VET qualification is about to be/has been issued
- verifying USIs via the USI Registry System
- ensuring that RTOs using exempt codes are doing so in valid scenarios only.

Contacting the AVETMISS support team			
Fill out our **contact form**	**Email:** support@ncver.edu.au	**Phone**: 08 8230 8400	**Toll free:** 1800 649 452