

Our Ref: 117936

13 January 2012

Department of Industry, Innovation, Science Research and Tertiary Education
USI Secretariat
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA, ACT 2601

To whom it may concern,

Unique Student Identifier (USI) Regulation Impact Statement

I am writing in response to the Unique Student Identifier (USI) COAG Consultation Regulation Impact Statement (RIS).

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) supports the introduction of a national USI as a mechanism to record all accredited VET undertaken, and qualifications achieved for each individual over his or her lifetime. The USI will be an essential foundation for the VET reform agenda, providing benefits not only to the student, but also establishing a solid framework of information for a more flexible and demand driven VET system, negating the need for statistical matching and estimation techniques, which are at best cumbersome and prone to error.

I emphasise that these benefits can only be achieved by the mandatory provision of data by all training providers to the National VET Provider Collection. If this does not proceed, a national USI will only support a partial record of VET attainment.

The Regulation Impact Statement anticipates that the USI will be introduced as part of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information System Standard (AVETMISS) release 7.0. NCVER supports this implementation in 2014 to minimise training provider burden, but noting that we will need to be informed of the format and structure of the USI well in advance of mid 2012 when AVETMISS release 7.0 is to be published.

NCVER, as the custodian of the national VET database (the National VET Provider Collection) will be affected by the introduction of the USI in a number of ways. Specifically, NCVER will need to:

Accommodate the USI in the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information System Standard (AVETMISS) - proposed for release 7.0 in 2014

Validate the USI as part of the AVETMISS validation software - this will include validation of the format of the USI, but not identify verification

Accommodate the USI in the National VET Provider Collection databases, and uphold the design principles so that individual identifying information is not stored with the USI

It is anticipated that these changes will be accommodated by NCVER as part of our statistical services contract with the Department. This will ensure that the USI is implemented in the most cost effective and seamless manner.

However, NCVER will also need to:

Modify the National VET Provider Collection database structure to facilitate the extraction of a transcript of student activity

Allow external access by the USI Service to this database to support a transcription service.

These activities will incur additional costs, which will need to be discussed with the appropriate agencies before they can be implemented.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Pattison', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sandra Pattison
General Manager, Statistics