

## Appendix F – Annual Report of the Student Identifiers Registrar

### About the Unique Student Identifier

The Unique Student Identifier (USI) is a strategic initiative aimed at enhancing the educational landscape by providing a streamlined and comprehensive approach to managing student records. Since its introduction in 2015, over 15 million USIs have been created and the initiative continues to expand, with more than 3,600 education or training providers and vocational education and training (VET) or higher education related entities using the system.

Students need a USI if they are studying nationally recognised VET; if they are in higher education and needing assistance from the Higher Education Loan Program or enrolling in a Commonwealth supported place; or if they are a higher education student graduating.

The USI is a linkage key, creating more accurate data on vocational education enrolments, training completion and higher education commencements. In this way it can support targeted policy making and resource allocation by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments.

### Authorising legislation

The *Student Identifiers Act 2014* provides for a Commonwealth statutory office holder, the Student Identifiers Registrar, to oversee the implementation and management of the USI nationally. The Registrar's functions include:

- assigning and verifying student identifiers
- preparing a student's authenticated transcript
- enabling students to give third parties access to their transcript
- protecting students' personal information from unauthorised access or misuse.

The Registrar is appointed on a full-time basis for up to 5 years by the Commonwealth Minister for Skills and Training following consultation with equivalent ministers in each state and territory. Mr Glen Watson was acting Student Identifiers Registrar from 1 July 2023 until the appointment of the Registrar, Mr Craig Ward, who commenced on 15 January 2024.

The Registrar is assisted by employees from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, and by contractors. On 30 June 2024, there were a total of 70 staff supporting the Registrar.

The Registrar manages the Student Identifiers Special Account. The account is a special account for the purposes of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The appropriation for the 2023–24 financial year was \$8.331 million and the total spend was \$7.541 million.

This report is prepared in compliance with section 51 of the *Student Identifiers Act 2014*.

## Registrar overview

Over the past year we have continued to provide a simple and secure customer service while also delivering significant progress for the USI initiative, marked by widespread adoption, enhanced features and strategic initiatives focused on risk management, data analytics and stakeholder engagement. Over 15.6 million USIs have been created since commencing, including 1.2 million this reporting year, across all Australian education and training institutions, from VET to higher education. Campaigns to increase awareness have seen a significant increase in VET transcript views and downloads, up more than 29% on the previous year.

Customer satisfaction and feedback, driven by our dedicated team, continue to place USI services at the leading edge of Australian Government services, through both our digital and customer call centre channels.

## Continuous improvement and building trust

We continue to focus on building our brand and trust at every opportunity through clear communication across multiple channels. Regular updates to students and stakeholders regarding changes, improvements and new features of the USI system help our students and stakeholders remain engaged and continue to support it as a trusted platform.

In December 2023, the USI system was onboarded to myGov. The uptake since its introduction has seen steady growth to over 200,000 active users by June 2024. Students who wish to can now access government services from one place, including linking their USI account to their myGov account.

The link provides direct access to a student's USI and their VET transcript via a single login. Benefits also include removing the need for these students to retrieve forgotten USIs or reset USI account passwords online or via the USI contact centre.

## Risk-based and data-driven regulation

A renewed focus on further developing a positive risk culture where staff of all levels understand and appropriately manage risk in their daily work has initiated changes such as strengthening our verifiable identity document requirements and improving our data breach escalation process and procedures.

The collection of comprehensive operational data has enabled us to identify patterns, trends and potential issues. This analysis has enabled evidence-based decision making which has informed our key performance indicators, ensuring we continue to align with customer expectations across our services.

## Collaboration and engagement

The Office of the Student Identifiers Registrar (OSIR) continues regular consultation with a wide range of stakeholders through scheduled meetings and internal and external reference groups. Our USI outreach program provided opportunities across the states and territories to learn the value of the USI, through events, conferences and many targeted campaigns throughout the year.

We have partnered closely with the Department of Education for the expansion of the USI into the schools sector, scheduled to commence in 2025. We have worked together with states, territories and school authorities to ensure they are informed and can provide feedback to influence the final solution, in readiness for its rollout.

The future outlook is promising, with opportunities for further expansion into schools and technological innovation that ensures the USI continues to play a crucial role in Australia's education and training system.

**Craig Ward**  
Student Identifiers Registrar

## 2023–24 at a glance



**1.2** million new USIs



**15.6** million total USIs as at 30 June 2024



**2** million transcript views/downloads  
(29% increase\*)



**35,600** USIs created using Digital Identity  
bringing the total to **111,300**



**7,400** USI accounts accessed using  
Digital Identity



**9.6** million self-service transactions



**193,000** calls handled (14,241 more calls\*)



**81,000** online help requests actioned



**56 seconds** call average speed of answer  
(51 seconds faster\*^)



**0** notifiable data breaches reported to Office  
of the Australian Information Commissioner\*

\* Compared to 2022–23 data

^ Based on daily averages

# USI mission statement

The graphic is a rounded rectangle divided into four quadrants, each with a different background color and an icon. A central grey circle overlaps the four quadrants. The top-left quadrant is purple with an icon of two people and the text 'Know our market'. The top-right quadrant is dark blue with a shield icon and the text 'Deliver a simple and secure customer experience'. The bottom-left quadrant is dark grey with a person wearing a headset icon and the text 'Innovate to improve our USI customer experience and do our work more efficiently'. The bottom-right quadrant is teal with a classical building icon and the text 'Support the Government and through it the nation'. The central grey circle contains a lightbulb icon and the text 'Enable and inspire team USI to take ownership and do its best work'.

**Know our market**

**Deliver a simple and secure customer experience**

**Innovate to improve our USI customer experience and do our work more efficiently**

**Support the Government and through it the nation**

Enable and inspire team USI to take ownership and do its best work

**Mission statement**

Your lifelong education number

 Australian Government

 USI Unique Student Identifier

# Performance information

## GOAL 1: KNOW OUR MARKET

### KPI: we know who our customers are and what they need from us

#### Directly engaged with our target audience:

- Surveyed over 114,500 customers to rate our service via phone, portal and webpage.
- Attended 15 student career expos and 7 industry forums:
  - › promoting the USI to over 170,000 students in high school, higher education and VET sectors
  - › connecting with over 4,000 industry representatives
  - › gaining 104 direct leads
  - › gaining 4,896 new social media followers, reaching 4.727 million accounts and achieving 10,852 engagements with 272 customers contacting us with questions.
- Sent 14 electronic direct marketing messages on the USI to over 104,000 recipients with an average open rate of 45%.

#### Collaborated with key stakeholders:

- *Where to Next?* magazine, published by Careers Event, reached 26,200 students in Brisbane, Townsville, Mackay and Darwin.
- Developed targeted information for career advisors as a resource for students.
- Reached over 295,000 people through feature articles in resources by VELG, the National Careers Institute, Study Assist, and the Australian Centre for Career Education.
- Career Advisers Association of New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory Facebook post about the USI reached 1,500 followers.
- Career Council of Australia included the USI logo on their website during National Careers Week generating 9,600 impressions.

### Delivered targeted campaigns

- Promoted USI VET transcript by:
  - › creating a campaign pack for 30 key stakeholders from various industries, including registered training organisations, TAFEs, healthcare and community services, and trades and services
  - › distributing information via Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, TAFE SA, VELG, VET Development Centre, Association of Independent Schools) and Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators electronic news, reaching over 102,000 people and gaining 1,454 impressions, 4,622 opens, 910 clicks and 232 website hits
  - › promoting it on Instagram and Snapchat, achieving 778,195 impressions, 82,030 video views and 744 visits to the VET transcript landing page, resulting in a 12% increase in VET transcript downloads and a 10% increase in views.
- Promoted USI to school leavers via:
  - › more than 420,000 impressions directed to our website through external application and course search webpages
  - › online publications and direct emails with the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre, Queensland Tertiary Admission Centre (QTAC), South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC), Tertiary Institutions Service Centre and Universities Admission Centre (UAC), reaching 12,087
  - › QTAC with 51,500 copies sent to 727 schools, 18,000 page views, 255 clicks, and 7,000 impressions
  - › direct communications with 9,742 Year 12 students
  - › featuring in a guide distributed to 23,000 schools across South Australia and the Northern Territory via SATAC



- › a feature in the UAC Steps for Uni for Years 11 and 12 and Steps for Uni for Year 10 magazines, distributed to 129,000 people
- › social media generating over 2.5 million impressions with a reach of 117,598, and over 19,000 views of the Get a USI webpage. Total activity represented 14,000 more views on the website in comparison to the same time in the previous year
- › the Career Industry Council of Australia, reaching 6,287, resulting in 3,516 impressions with combined click rate of over 25%.

**GOAL 2: DELIVER A SIMPLE AND SECURE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

**What we did**

**To reduce customer effort, we changed our processes and:**

- Improved our data breach escalation process and procedures:
  - › students can now link their USI to their myGov account.
- Strengthened our verifiable identity document requirements for creating a USI and updating personal details.

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**KPI: SPEED OF SERVICE**

- 🕒 **TARGET:** Average speed to answer does not exceed **2 minutes and 30 seconds**
- ✅ **ACHIEVEMENT:** Average is **56 seconds**

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**KPI: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

- 🕒 **TARGET:** 85% of *callers* surveyed are satisfied with our service\*
- ✅ **ACHIEVEMENT:** 89.2% of respondents gave us 5 out of 5 stars

\* 86,117 customers took our post-call survey.

- 🕒 **TARGET:** 85% of customers using the *USI Portal* are satisfied (based on 4 and 5 star rating)\*

- ❌ **ACHIEVEMENT:** 81% of users are satisfied with their USI Portal experience

\* 2,353 customers responded via the portal survey upon successful creation or location of their USI.

- 🕒 **TARGET:** 90% of users are satisfied with their *USI website* experience (yes/no rating)\*

- ❌ **ACHIEVEMENT:** 78.6% of users are satisfied with their USI website experience

\* 26,128 customers provided feedback via the website feedback question.

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**KPI: THE USI REGISTRY SYSTEM SUPPORTS SELF-SERVICE**

- 🕒 **TARGET:** 90% of transactions are self-service
  - ✅ **ACHIEVEMENT:** 97.24%
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### KPI: THE USI REGISTRY SYSTEM IS HIGHLY AVAILABLE

- 🕒 **TARGET:** 99% of the time the Student Portal is available and operational
- ✅ **ACHIEVEMENT:** 99.88%

### KPI: NUMBER OF DATA BREACHES

- 🕒 **TARGET:** 0 reportable data breaches\*
- ✅ **ACHIEVEMENT:** 0 reportable breaches

\* Reportable data breaches are those that may cause serious harm to an individual and therefore must be reported to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

### KPI: STAFF PROTECT STUDENTS' PERSONAL INFORMATION

- 🕒 **TARGET:** 100% of staff are trained in, and aware of, their privacy obligations

#### ACHIEVEMENT:

- ✅ 100% of staff completed mandatory privacy, security, and fraud awareness training
- ✅ 100% of staff completed data breach training in accordance with OAIC requirements

### GOAL 3: SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT AND THROUGH IT THE NATION

### KPI: WE SUPPORT AND ENABLE GOVERNMENT POLICY

#### What we did

##### Collaborated

- Provided data for the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth and the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).

- Partnered with the Department of Education and worked closely with states, territories and schools' authorities for the expansion of USI into schools in 2025.
- Engaged with key stakeholders in response to the Australian Government announcement and consultation phase for a National Skills Passport.
- Provided historical data to the NSW Department of Education for the Pathways Program.
- With Services Australia, enhanced myGov functionality for USI users.

#### Were responsive

- Granted USI exemptions to:
  - › 80 onshore VET students
  - › 22 onshore higher education students
  - › 30 offshore VET students
  - › 306 offshore higher education students.
- Provided 406 international students with confirmation of automatic exemption from the USI as per the Student Identifiers (Higher Education Exemptions) Instrument.
- Processed 25 compliance requests for information about 280 individuals for 13 law enforcement or regulatory agencies.
- Granted exemptions to 45 applicants with a genuine privacy objection to being assigned a USI.
- Analysed over 2,500 evidence of identity forms enabling students who did not have identity documents to create a USI.

#### Maintained policy and clarified the USI Initiative

- Developed a suite of policy documents to strengthen our identity requirements when creating a USI and updating personal details.
- Reviewed evidence of identity forms for incarcerated people to identify gaps and add further improvements.

**GOAL 4: INNOVATE TO IMPROVE OUR USI CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND DO OUR WORK MORE EFFICIENTLY**

**KPI: WE ARE OPEN TO NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS**

**What we did**

**Improved services**

- Improved website content and internal resources on verifiable identification documents and alternative identification options.
- Developed a resource on creating a USI, updating personal details and USI VET transcripts to assist education and training providers supporting students with special or unusual circumstances.
- Informed education and training providers on privacy awareness, terms and conditions and privacy notices required when creating a USI on behalf of a student.
- Developed a new Quality Assurance Framework to improve performance, customer satisfaction and efficiency.
- Reviewed induction and training to improve efficiency, quality of service and support.

**Through the Registry System**

- Transitioned 100% of organisations to the new Web Services 5.
- Improved functionality through 6 system releases.
- Introduced new expanded responses for students using Medicare and Centrelink concession cards as verifiable identification when creating or updating their USI details.
- Improved the Student Portal login through myGovID.

**Were responsive**

- Enhanced our technology to improve staff productivity and provide customers a seamless experience.

**GOAL 5: ENABLE AND INSPIRE TEAM USI TO TAKE OWNERSHIP AND DO ITS BEST WORK**

**KPI: OUR CULTURE SUPPORTS STAFF**

**What we did**

**Invested in staff development**

- Invested in leadership and plain English training for staff.
- Created tools to assist supervisors to improve staff capabilities and growth to better performance for use in performance assessment discussions.
- Redefined the roles of senior staff in the national contact centre to improve the relationship between staff and their immediate supervisor by increasing the quality and regularity of engagement.

**Engaged staff in activities and initiatives**

- Participated in Australia's Biggest Morning Tea and Pride month.
- Introduced Mates March, team walks and staff highlight editorials to advance culture.
- Acknowledged efforts and successes and shared future strategy with all staff at an event that 87% of those surveyed reported as informative and 100% as enjoyable.



# Culture Statement



## Trust

We have a firm belief in one another to be reliable, truthful and capable.



## Learning

We learn from the past to prepare for our future.



## Working together

Even when working alone we are working together to support our mission statement.



## Transparent communication

Everyone has a voice and we know the 'why' behind decisions.

### KPI: WE ARE A GOOD PLACE TO WORK

🎯 **TARGET:** 100% of staff report role clarity, support, and a line of sight to our customers

Table F.1: Goal 5 performance measures, 2023–24

Achievement	Annual average strongly/agreed*
I understand what is expected of me and my current role	97%
I understand how my job contributes to the customer experience	95%
I believe the USI team has a strong privacy culture	97%
I know who to ask if I need help with any aspects of my current role	100%
I have the necessary resources I need to perform my duties	84%
I feel that my manager sees my wellbeing as a priority	97%
I feel that my ideas are welcome	87%
I understand the link between my job and the USI mission statement	92%
I have discussed my learning and development needs with my manager	89%

\* Staff are surveyed bi-annually in September and March.