# Appendix G – Annual Report of the Student Identifiers Registrar

This report is prepared in compliance with Division 5 Section 51 of the *Student Identifiers Act 2014* (the SI Act).

The SI Act provides for a Commonwealth statutory office holder, the Student Identifiers Registrar (the Registrar), to oversee the implementation and management of the Unique Student Identifier (USI) nationally.

## About the Unique Student Identifier

The USI is a randomly generated alpha-numerical 10-digit identifier.

Introduced in 2015 following the passage of the SI Act, the USI is a linkage key enabling the collection of information about students' training and study activity and their movements within the education systems. This information provides an important foundation for understanding and improving vocational education and training (VET) and higher education performance, and better meeting the needs of students, education or training providers, and employers.

Students need a USI if they are:

- studying a VET course
- seeking financial assistance through a VET student loan
- enrolling in a Commonwealth supported place or seeking Commonwealth financial assistance through the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)
- a higher education student graduating.

## Authorising legislation

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 Minister for Skills and Training following consultation with the Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council. The Registrar in the 2024–25 reporting period was Mr Craig Ward, who commenced in the role on 15 January 2024.

The Registrar is assisted by employees from DEWR and labour hire workers. As at 30 June 2025, there were a total of 58.8 full-time equivalent staff supporting the Registrar.

Under Part 4 Division 4 of the SI Act, a Student Identifiers Special Account has been established for the purposes of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* to be used for meeting the costs in the performance of the Registrar's functions. The appropriation for the 2024–25 financial year was $8,447,200.00 and the total expenditure was $10,144,932.34. Additional resources were required due to critical system upgrades to the USI Registry System and the funds were sourced from the USI Special Account.

# Registrar's overview

I am pleased to submit my Annual Report for 2024–25.

Over 16.6 million USIs have been created since 2015, including 1.04 million this reporting year. Collaboration with our stakeholders to increase awareness of the benefits of the USI has seen a continuing upward trend of USI VET transcript views and downloads with a 24% increase from the previous financial year.

Our business priorities covering 2024 to 2026 support our continued purpose of providing a simple, secure and trusted service linking the education and training journey for students, whether they are studying across the VET or higher education sectors. Our priorities are underpinned by the Australian Government best practice principles of continuous improvement and building trust, collaboration and engagement; and being risk based and data driven – all while upholding the Australian Public Service values and employment principles.

Ensuring the security and protection of data entrusted to us remains our highest priority, as demonstrated in our investment to uplifting the USI Registry System through staged digital reforms.

Our commitment to regulatory compliance elevates our data capability through new strategies for audit and compliance, and data governance. Key deliverables this year set the foundation to support faster, scalable, reliable and well-constructed data for reporting and analytics.

As education, training, data integration, privacy and technology progress, the USI Initiative continues to play a crucial role in Australia's education and training system.

**Craig Ward**
Student Identifiers Registrar

## At a glance | 2024–25

**1.04 million** new USIs

**16.6 million** total USIs

**2.4 million** transcript views/downloads (24% increase*)

**39,455** USIs created using Digital ID bringing the total to 150,769

**29,427** USI accounts accessed using Digital ID

**9.1 million** self-service transactions

**184,078** calls handled (8,922 fewer calls*^)

**62,411** actioned online requests for help** (11% decrease*)

**128 seconds** average call wait time (72 seconds slower*)

**308,861** active USI accounts linked to myGov, bringing the total to 535,727

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

* Compared to 2023–24 data.
^ Based on daily average.
** Includes portal-created Help Requests and emails.

# Guiding Principle 1: Continuous improvement and building trust

**Statement:** Innovate and continuously improve our service so that our USI account holders and stakeholders trust in our product.

To meet our objective of excellence in customer service, we:

- improved our website experience. Following extensive user experience analysis including consideration of customer feedback, we developed a new USI website which was launched on 21 May 2025. The new USI website has improvements to structure and layout, content, navigation and fundamentals such as improved image and form navigability across a range of devices
- undertook consultation and commenced a business case for digital self-help improvements
- enhanced our customer satisfaction by strengthening and implementing streamlined quality assurance processes. This was reflected in the average service level of the contact centre of 79% of calls answered within 5 minutes, exceeding the service level agreement target of 67.7%
- created a new USI VET transcript request form for incarcerated people which improved access and process
- analysed over 1,159 evidence of identity forms, enabling students who did not have identity documents to create a USI.

To meet our objective of innovation and growth, we:

- completed service design requirements to transform USI VET transcripts to enable USI account holders to share transcripts with trusted digital applications
- completed service design requirements for 3 system enhancement features to allow third parties who have received verifiable transcripts, and for registered training organisations and VET related bodies who have account permission, to verify USI VET transcripts in bulk
- provided project management, governance, and IT business requirements in coordination with Department of Education for the delivery of the USI schools project
- supported the Australian Taxation Office and Services Australia with the whole-of-government rebrand of myGovID to myID and of Digital Identity to Digital ID.

## KPI: SPEED OF SERVICE

**TARGET:** Average speed to answer does not exceed **2 minutes and 30 seconds**.

**ACHIEVEMENT:** Average is **128 seconds**.

## KPI: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

**TARGET:** 85% of **callers** surveyed are satisfied with our service*

**ACHIEVEMENT:** 88.1% of respondents gave us 5 out of 5 stars

* 62,598 customers took our post-call survey.

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

**ACHIEVEMENT:** 82.3% of users are satisfied with their USI Portal experience

* 2,046 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:** 76.4% of users are satisfied with their USI website experience

* 5,590 customers provided feedback via the website feedback question.

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

**TARGET:** 90% of transactions are self-service

**ACHIEVEMENT:** 97.6%

## KPI: THE USI REGISTRY SYSTEM IS HIGHLY AVAILABLE

**TARGET:** 99% of the time the Student Portal is available and operational

**ACHIEVEMENT:** 99.8%

# Guiding Principle 2: Risk based and data driven regulation

## **Statement:** Protect data and security to ensure and maintain public confidence in the USI.

To meet our objective of data privacy and security, we:

- completed an external and independent cyber-security assessment through the Infosec Registered Assessors Program and actioned to completion all critical and high-priority recommendations from that report
- introduced multi-factor authentication and passphrases for students accessing the USI Student Portal
- created the Data Breach Response Plan and Data Breach Guide detailing the appropriate policies, guidelines and systems that are in place to protect personal information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the SI Act
- built staff understanding of the regulator's approach to risk by facilitating internal workshops, embedded risk awareness into procedures, ensured staff are compliant in risk management training, and appointed risk culture leaders within each team.

## **Statement:** Regularly review our practices to meet changing social, technological and commercial contexts; and inform and support our stakeholders on their compliance responsibilities.

To meet our objective of being regulatory and compliance focused, we undertook the following activities:

- established a compliance and audit strategy to:
  - mitigate any harm or public confidence in the integrity of the USI Registry System
  - protect students and the reputation of the education and training sector
  - educate training providers on their compliance obligations and encourage voluntary compliance
  - effectively and proportionately respond to any identified non compliance
- created a compliance health check survey which was sent to 7% of all education or training providers in Australia, with results of 90% response and 99% compliance rate
- reinforced compliance obligations for education or training providers through a broad awareness campaign via targeted email communications to over 6,000 providers, with an open rate of 42.8%
- reviewed and updated the USI's business assurance and risk management plans against whole-of-government models, frameworks and standards; achieved compliance with legislative requirements and industry standards; and established consistent and effective processes and practices
- designed and implemented a data strategy to guide collection, analysis and reporting, and undertook an assessment which established a baseline of current capabilities and identified priority areas for uplift
- completed the design and foundational build of a new data hub to support faster, scalable, reliable and well-structured data for reporting and analytics
- enabled new data sharing initiatives with key stakeholders to support legal investigations and contribute to regulation of service providers in the VET sector.

### 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 (OAIC).

### 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

# Guiding Principle 3: Collaboration and engagement

## Directly engaged with our target audience:

- by surveying 70,234 customers to rate our service via phone, portal and webpage
- through attendance at 15 student events and sponsorship of 5 industry forums:
  - promoted the USI to over 164,000 students in high school, higher education and VET
  - connected with over 2,000 industry representatives
  - surveyed 11,075 students, identifying that 80% of respondents had limited to no knowledge of USI
  - gained 149 direct leads
  - sent 3,975 USI explanatory flyers to 7 schools and 531 industry representatives at the 2024 Career Advisers Association of NSW & ACT
  - gained 1,706 new social media followers, reached 1,897,278 million unique users and achieved 7,332 engagements, with 88 customers contacting us for further information
- by sending 23 electronic direct marketing newsletters providing policy information on a range of issues, including international students and higher education enrolments, to 86,848 recipients, with an average open rate of 52.7%
- through 343 organic social media posts engaging with 5,885 followers. We gained 1,706 new followers, reached 1,897,278 unique users who viewed the content and achieved 7,332 engagements, with 88 customers directly contacting us. Most of our content was published on Instagram and Facebook, with the former demonstrating an engagement rate of over 10%.

## Collaborated with key stakeholders

- *Where to Next?* magazine, published by Careers Event, reached 23,921 students in Brisbane, Mackay, Townsville and the Sunshine Coast
- Worked with Career Industry Council of Australia on:
  - 3 social media posts resulting in 218,926 impressions and 2,336 clicks
  - social media Premier Partner Recognition post
  - featuring USI logo on the National Careers Week homepage and a USI presence at headline events
  - 3 eNews communications on the USI initiative reached 128,490 subscribers
- Worked with the Heads of Student Administration to deliver a webinar to 176 members and subsequently provided Q&As in response to issues raised
- Engaged with universities to update their websites with accurate information for international students
- The USI logo was displayed on the Australian Centre for Career Education (ACCE) website, resulting in 127 page views and 92 link clicks to the USI website homepage
- Engaged with the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC), South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) and Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) to promote the USI to school leavers through a variety of mediums.

## Delivered targeted campaigns

Promoted USI VET transcripts, resulting in an annual 24% increase in views and downloads through:

- collaboration with the SA Business Chamber via electronic direct marketing reaching 32,142 members
- paid social media resulting in over 4.1 million impressions, reaching over 1 million unique users and generating 51,402 clicks
- articles in Vocational Education Learning Group's electronic magazine reaching 1,852 subscribers
- information posted through the National Careers Institute and National Skills Week sponsors, producing 1,950 impressions and 1,501 clicks to the USI website
- an article distributed to 117 member schools of the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia, resulting in 232 clicks to the USI website.

## Promoted USI to school leavers via:

- a feature in the digital QTAC guides for Year 10 and Year 12, reaching 90,467 unique users who viewed the guides
- a full-page inclusion in the SATAC Guide 2024–2025, which saw 98,032 views online and an additional 500 physical copies distributed
- direct communication with 9,741 Year 12 students across South Australia and the Northern Territory via SATAC
- a feature in the 2025 TISC Guide, which was distributed in hard copy in July 2024 to 10,240 schools and stakeholders in Western Australia, and in a digital version reaching 8,359 unique users
- social media generating over 5.6 million impressions with a reach of 721,325 unique users from 2.8 million followers, resulting in 92,770 clicks to the 'Get a USI' webpage

- a *Canberra City News* editorial reaching an audience of 25,600
- collaboration with the Career Advisers Association of New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory on direct electronic news and marketing material reaching 3,408 recipients, and on a news item reaching 933 subscribers
- an editorial in *The Canberra Times* reaching an audience of 35,000
- 2 newsletters from the Australian Capital Territory Careers Association reaching 135 recipients
- a newsletter article from the Career Development Association of Australia reaching 1,185 recipients
- the ACCE electronic newsletter to 1,056 subscribers, resulting in a 41.75% open rate and a 31.36% click rate.

## **Statement:** Foster an environment where team collaboration thrives and invest in our people to build on wellbeing and capability for today and tomorrow.

- Strengthened team engagement and morale at the annual OSIR All Staff Event and achieved 100% employee satisfaction in the post-event survey
- Promoted a culture of recognition and appreciation that encourages continued collaboration and excellence through the Staff and Culture Awards
- Participated in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' reconciliation efforts through active representation on the Indigenous Business is Everyone's Business committee and the DEWR Community of Practice on Closing the Gap, and the identification and selection of an office reconciliation champion
- All staff participated in 7 group training sessions focusing on both soft skills and role-specific competencies to support professional development and cross-team capability building
- Contact centre staff attended multiple courses tailored to upskill resilience, effective communication, cultural sensitivity and team cohesion
- Completed the discovery phase for an operational workforce plan by uplifting identified DEWR resources and business requirements
- Improved the internal staff survey to ensure alignment to DEWR census themes and identified a monitoring and evaluation system aimed to increase survey engagement and encourage quality data collection
- Reinforced team achievements and cultivated a pride and purpose by sharing positive customer service feedback with all staff
- Created a positive culture for staff through multiple activities designed to foster team interaction, share social responsibilities, foster inclusivity and engage and connect.

## Culture

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

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

| Staff Survey – Achievement | Strongly/agreed | |
|---|---|---|
| | April 2024 – October 2024 | November 2024 – March 2025 |
| I understand what is expected of me and my current role | 97% | 100% |
| I understand how my job contributes to the customer experience | 100% | 100% |
| I believe the USI team has a strong privacy culture | 100% | 100% |
| I know who to ask if I need help with any aspects of my current role | 100% | 98% |
| I have the necessary resources I need to perform my duties | 93% | 96% |
| I feel that my manager sees my wellbeing as a priority | 97% | 94% |
| I feel that my ideas are welcome | 97% | 94% |
| I understand the link between my job and the USI mission statement | 99% | 100% |
| I have discussed my learning and development needs with my manager | 97% | 98% |
| How likely are you to recommend USI as a good place to work to someone you know? | 67NPS* | 63NPS* |

* Net promoter score