



Students on Practicum

Safety Checking under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 A Resource for Early Learning Services

What must be done	If you are hosting students on practicum e.g. student teacher, student social worker, student counselor	Your notes
Agree on a candidate	Agree with an Initial Teacher Education provider (ITE)/Tertiary Education Organisation (TEO) who the student will be and the length of their work placement, pending your risk assessment.	
Do a safety check	<p>While the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 (VCA) is clear that early learning services are accountable for ensuring students have been safety checked, the VCA allows these checks to be done by another organisation (such as an ITE/TEO) on their behalf.</p> <p>Where a safety check has been completed by an ITE/TEO on your behalf, you should still confirm it was to the VCA standard, do an identity check and a risk assessment.</p>	
ITEs/TEOs conducting safety checks on your behalf	<p>You should expect to receive a letter or email of introduction from the ITE/TEO which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ask you to agree to them acting on your behalf• include each individual student's name• confirm the safety check has been carried out to the VCA standard and• confirm the student has given consent for the relevant safety checking information to be passed on to your early learning service.	
Confirm their identity	<p>To confirm the person who arrives at your early learning service is the person in the letter of introduction, ask the student to provide you with two forms of identity documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an original primary identity document (e.g. passport) and• a secondary identity document (e.g. driver's licence). <p>If neither document contains a photograph, you can use an identity referee to verify the person's identity.</p> <p>There is a requirement under the Act to check your personnel records to make sure the identity is not being or has been used by any other person employed or engaged by your early learning service.</p>	
Assess the risk and make your decision	<p>Evaluate the information you have gathered to assess the risk the student would pose to the safety of children if engaged.</p> <p>Is the person safe to work with children? Will they actively contribute to a culture of child protection, make the safety of a child a priority, support your child protection policy etc? Make your decision based on your risk assessment and inform the ITE/TEO.</p>	
Keep a record	<p>Keep a record of the information you gathered, when you gathered it and the date when safety checks need to be carried out again (in 3 years time).</p> <p>Attach this to the student's personnel file and ensure it is securely stored.</p> <p>Ensure you meet your obligations under the Privacy Act (Principle 9) when retaining and disposing of employment records.</p>	