Student Clinics Policy

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Policy outlines Victoria University's (VU) commitment to:

a. The safety of students, staff and consumers in its Clinics; and
b. providing appropriate quality management systems and processes to achieve safe, client-centred and effective care consistent with the Australian Safety and Quality Framework for Health Care.

Section 2 - Accountability

Accountable/Responsible Officer	Role
Accountable Officer	Executive Dean, College of Sport, Health and Engineering
Responsible Officer	Chair of Internal Clinics Working Group (ICWG) and Executive Director, College of Health, Early Childhood Education and Community Services (TAFE)

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

a. All VU Clinics;
b. All healthcare staff, professional staff, students, supervisors, academic staff and volunteers in their activities at, with or on behalf of the Clinic;
c. All client care, educational, and management activities performed at, with or on behalf of the Clinic; and
d. Clients, carers and members of the public that interact with the Clinic.

(3) This Policy does not apply to:

a. Clinical placements where the placement of students is with external healthcare providers (e.g. hospitals) not operated by VU; and
b. The research operations of any Clinics.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(4) VU operates Clinics:

a. As learning and teaching environments, supporting the practical education of future healthcare professionals; and,
b. To provide course requirements for students enrolled in clinic-related courses at VU and to undertake high-quality clinical experience in-house.

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(5) VU is committed to best practice in the clinical teaching and learning environment across Clinics; and will ensure clinics have business processes, effective systems and processes, course viability, business plans and course governance.

Learning and Teaching in Clinics

(6) Clinics are learning and teaching environments, supporting the practical education of future healthcare professionals to:

a. undertake single or group student consultations;
b. ensure continuous improvement of techniques for client treatment, communication and service;
c. access guidelines, care and clinical pathways relevant to their clinical practice, professional knowledge, experience and skills.

(7) Clinics are a vital part of the educational experience offered to VU students in health and allied health disciplines. Practical experience opportunities:

a. have clearly defined learning outcomes for each unit of study involving Clinic experience;
b. support students' learning through their Clinic experiences;
c. allow students the opportunity to work collaboratively with other Clinics to practice and learn approaches to healthcare delivery; and
d. enable students to complete their practical experience in a real workplace setting, complete work placement, and practice their skills in a supervised environment integrated into the course requirements.

Evidence-base Care

(8) All VU Clinics will provide healthcare staff with access to guidelines, care and clinical pathways relevant to their clinical practice, professional knowledge and experience, and skills under the Clinical Care Standards (Cth).

Risk Management

(9) VU is committed to fostering a culture of clinical safety and ensuring continuous improvement in identifying and managing risk.

(10) The Head of Program Clinical Services (HE) and Executive Director, College of Health, Early Childhood Education and Community Services (TAFE) are responsible for monitoring risk. They will achieve this via:

a. A risk register which is regularly monitored as per risk management protocols;
b. VU Clinics risk management system, which:
    i. documents policies, procedures, data collections and protocols;
    ii. integrates the control of clinics occupational health and safety and risk minimisation; and,
    iii. plans for and manages internal and external emergencies.
c. A Clinical Governance Committee which oversees and governs the delivery of safe, effective and efficient Clinics run by VU; and
d. Orientation, education and training of staff and students with appropriate information about the Clinics' risk management system.

Clinical Governance and Accountability

(11) The Executive Dean, College of Sport, Health and Engineering and the Chief TAFE Officer are accountable for clinical services.

(12) The Head of Program Clinical Services (HE) and Executive Director, College of Health, Early Childhood Education and Community Services (TAFE) are responsible for the delivery of clinical services.

(13) The Clinical Governance Framework of VU Clinics consists of:

a. the Student Health Clinics Committee which oversees the operations of all Clinics;
b. the Clinical Governance Committee which oversees and governs the delivery of safe, effective and efficient Clinics run by VU, and receives a quarterly report from the Student Health Clinics Committee on the operations of all Clinics; and,
c. the Learning and Teaching Quality Committee which receives a bi-annual report from the Clinical Governance Committee on governance-related matters.

(14) VU Clinics will have an implementation plan as set out in the National Model Clinical Governance Framework, consistent with the Australian Safety and Quality Framework for Health Care.

Workforce Planning and Development

(15) VU is committed to building the capabilities and effectiveness of staff in VU Clinics, and will ensure:

a. Staff have adequate skills, training and experience within their discipline;
b. Continuing professional development includes ongoing regular education and research related activities; and
c. Healthcare staff delivering services are both appropriately qualified and accredited with their professional association or accrediting body.

Clinic Performance and Effectiveness

(16) Clinic performance aligns with standards under the Clinical Governance Standard (Cth) and the Student Clinics Procedure. VU ensures clinical performance and effectiveness by:

a. assessing that healthcare staff have the right qualifications, skills and supervision to provide safe, high-quality healthcare to client care; and
b. ensuring proper care and advice is offered to client care at the appropriate time by a clinic supervisor who has the skills, experience and knowledge.

(17) VU Clinics are committed to the principles of client-centred care and community participation, and will ensure activities and strategies exist for capturing and acting upon customer satisfaction feedback in line with the Clinical Governance Standard (Cth).

Complaints Process

(18) Complaints by the members of the public about the University, its staff, its students, or operations may be submitted in accordance with the Complaints Policy.

Scope of Practice

(19) All staff and students will operate strictly within the scope of practice of the discipline in which they are working and, where appropriate:

a. be registered at the level relevant to the professional body under the National Model Clinical Governance Framework;
b. maintain strict confidentiality, privacy and accurate records;
c. abide by the client's right to personal privacy and modesty;

d. create and maintain a safe, healthy environment for the practice; and
e. comply with the Health Records Act (Vic) 2001.

Professional Behaviour

Staff and Students

(20) All students and healthcare staff have a professional and ethical obligation to protect and promote public health and safe healthcare, behave professionally at all times, and abide by the relevant discipline's codes of practice.

(21) Staff and students will:

a. Act in the best interests of the client;
b. follow the principles of client rights and engagement; and
c. Remove themselves from providing care if there is:
    i. a conflict of interest;
    ii. any factor, whether temporary or ongoing, affecting their capacity to deliver appropriate care; or
    iii. any issue that is outside of the scope of practice.

Clients, carers and members of the public

(22) Clients, their carers and members of the public interacting with Clinics are expected to behave appropriately. In particular:

a. Aggressive or abusive speech or behaviour towards staff, students, other clients or carers will not be tolerated. People who exhibit these behaviours will be required to leave the Clinic immediately.
b. Generally offensive or objectionable behaviour will lead to a request for the behaviour to cease. If this request should be disregarded, the individual will be asked to leave the clinic.

(23) All VU clinics reserve the right to refuse further treatment to any individual who has previously exhibited aggressive, abusive or disrespectful behaviours towards staff, students, other clients, carers or members of the public.

Health and Safety

(24) VU recognises the importance of providing a safe and healthy environment for healthcare staff, professional staff, students, supervisors, contractors and visitors during their participation in work and training activities, as per the Health and Safety Policy.

(25) VU aspires for excellence in workplace health and safety and is committed to providing an environment which is conducive to the productivity and efficiency needs of its staff, students and others. Clinics will identify, monitor and mitigate any risk of injury in the clinical setting.

Privacy and Records Management

(26) VU Clinics ensure the responsible collection and handling of personal information in accordance with the Privacy Policy, the Privacy Statement for collection of student information and collection of staff information.

(27) All Clinics will maintain records of workplace hazards, workplace injuries, activities, including records of client-care and comply with VU's Records Management Policy and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).

Public Liability and Professional Indemnity

(28) VU's public liability and professional indemnity insurance extend to cover students undertaking a practical

placement, work experience, community placement and other activities which are part of or relevant to students' course. The public liability policy applies to claims for bodily injury or property damage to third parties. Professional indemnity provides cover for claims for breach of professional duty if VU is legally liable.

Section 5 - Procedures

(29) Student Clinics Procedure

Section 6 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(30) Higher Education Standards Framework: Standards 1.3 Orientation and Progression; 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment; 2.1 Facilities and Infrastructure; 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety; 2.4 Student Grievance and Complaints; 3.1 Course Design, 5.3 Monitoring, Review and Improvement, 5.4 Delivery with other parties.

(31) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standard 1.1, 1.2 Training; 2.5 Diversity and Inclusion; 4.3 Risk Management.

(32) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code): Standard 10 Complaints and Appeal.

Section 7 - Definitions

(33) Clinics: All clinics operated by or on behalf of Victoria University in any health, allied health, or social assistance field or fields, which provide clinical services as an opportunity for students enrolled in clinic-related courses at VU to undertake high-quality clinical experience in-house. Clinics include Clinical Exercise and Rehabilitation (VUCER), Dermal, Massage, Osteopathy, and Psychology, (excluding beauty services).

(34) Contract Manager: The Person responsible for each particular stage of the Contract life-cycle. The Contract Manager maybe someone in the relevant business area or it may be someone in a specialised VU department with responsibility for a group of contracts.

(35) Clients: Refers to a person who attends VU Clinics for the purpose of client consultation.

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