

Student Placement Policy

Section 1 - Rationale and Objective(s)

(1) The policy will ensure that:

- a. there is appropriate consistency and Quality Assurance in the management and administration of placements across the University;
- b. placements achieve their educational outcomes;
- c. reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the health and safety of students are not jeopardised by activities undertaken during placement;
- d. reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the University is not rendered liable for any conduct by either a student or placement supervisor during an external placement; and
- e. reasonable accommodation is made for students with a disability.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This policy relates to all clinical, professional, industrial or other placements that form part of a course or program coordinated by the University (see Note 1) and for which:

- a. students will be assessed; and/or
- b. a grade is awarded; and/or
- c. completion is required for an award of the University.

(3) This policy does not apply to unpaid work experience for students where such work is not a component of assessment for a course.

Section 3 - Provisions

(4) Placement supervisors, placement agency supervisors and students will be provided with appropriate preparation for undertaking placement which will include information regarding their role and responsibilities before, during and after the placement (refer to Section 5).

(5) Documentation for each placement will provide a clear statement regarding:-

- a. the procedures for allocation of placements;
- b. criteria for determining eligibility to undertake placement if any, for example, completion of required courses or program schedule requirements;
- c. the completion by students of any additional requirements, for example, vaccinations, first aid certificate, compulsory course components or course requisites;
- d. the provision by students of any required documentation, for example, Criminal Record Check, Commission for Children and Young People Working with Children Check - Student Declaration or health checks;

- e. any risk assessments which may have been undertaken by the Course Coordinator, school and/or placement agency.
- f. procedures for students with disabilities seeking to negotiate adjustments (refer Procedures attached to this policy);
- g. the roles and responsibilities of placement supervisors, placement agency supervisors and students before, during and after the placement;
- h. how the placement fits into the learning objectives of the course and program;
- i. whether the placement is required to comply with relevant professional accreditation;
- j. the specific learning objectives of the placement;
- k. how the placement is to be assessed including the means by which assessment will measure the achievement of the learning objectives;
- l. requirements for complying with privacy legislation within the agency in which the placement is to be undertaken;
- m. procedures for dealing with absences, conflict or other difficulties encountered during the placement, including breakdown of the placement due to student performance and/or other unforeseen circumstances (refer Procedures attached to this policy);
- n. an indication of the cost involved in the placement and clear advice that the cost must be borne by the student; and
- o. the date determined by the Head of School and advised in the Course Outline after which a student may not withdraw from a course containing a placement without academic penalty other than in exceptional circumstances and with approval from the Head of School.

(6) All students undertaking a placement will be supervised by a professional in the field preferably with at least two years professional experience, or a designated individual supervisor of equivalent clinical/professional/industrial experience.

(7) Placement agencies will provide, where appropriate, information and instruction in the form of an induction, to the student prior to them commencing any activity at the placement agency.

(8) Students will actively participate in any safety training or instruction provided by the placement agency until deemed competent by the trainer from the agency in performing any task in a safe manner.

(9) All students undertaking a placement will be in regular communication with agency and/or University supervisors.

(10) All students undertaking a placement will be provided with feedback during the placement regarding their progress towards the learning objectives of the placement (see Note 2).

(11) Placement agencies and placement agency supervisors will be provided with the necessary information, training and support to enable them to fulfil their role and responsibilities to the satisfaction of the University, the placement agency and students.

(12) Placement agencies, placement agency supervisors, placement supervisors and students will be advised of their responsibilities under Anti-Discrimination, OH&S and Privacy legislation and the University's Risk Management Policy.

Section 4 - Procedures for Addressing Student Placement

Placements for Students with Disabilities

(13) The University is required to provide reasonable accommodations in order for students with disabilities to complete placement requirements for programs in which they are enrolled.

(14) In order for accommodations to be made students must formally disclose their disability prior to the allocation of a placement and consent to the release of necessary information to placement agency staff for the purposes of making adjustments.

(15) The University cannot make any adjustments unless the student has provided this information and consent within an appropriate timeframe.

(16) The Placement Supervisor and/or the Course Co-ordinator will:-

- a. In conjunction with the University's Disability Support Services, ensure that an accurate assessment of the implications of the student's disability and the requirements of the placement are conducted;
- b. In conjunction with the Program Convenor, identify the inherent requirements of the placement in relation to the course and the program;
- c. In conjunction with the University's Disability Support Services and the Program Convenor, determine how the essential requirements of the course might be achieved whilst accommodating the needs of the student;
- d. Take account of the particular needs of the student in the selection of the placement agency and the arrangements made, for example, access, furniture, communication, flexibility of attendance, assessment changes/exemptions as appropriate;
- e. Ensure that implications for OH&S, duty of care and legal liability particularly in the context of Anti-Discrimination, OH&S and Privacy legislation are assessed. The University and the placement agency have a right to refuse a placement if either considers that there is a danger to the student, fellow workers or clients of the agency; and
- f. Ensure that any additional support mechanisms or review/monitoring processes that may be required are in place.

Procedures in the Case of Unsatisfactory Performance or Placement Breakdown

(17) These procedures are to be followed in the case of the breakdown of the placement.

(18) Students undertaking placements will be subject to a review of progress of the placement.

(19) Students who have:-

- a. failed to maintain satisfactory attendance, and/or
- b. failed to complete at a satisfactory standard in academic or professional components specified for the placement and/or course, and/or failed to maintain an appropriate standard of conduct may be identified as at risk of failing to maintain satisfactory progress in the course.

(20) Students may be identified as 'at risk' either by supervising staff of the placement agency and/or supervising staff of the University in accordance with the criteria as provided to the student prior to the commencement of the placement.

(21) A student identified as at risk of unsatisfactory progress will be notified in writing by the placement supervisor (see Note 2) who will:-

- a. indicate why they are at risk of failing to maintain satisfactory progress in the course;
- b. identify possible remedial action;

- c. clearly identify the timeframe for taking remedial action;
- d. clearly outline that if they continue to be at risk of failing to maintain satisfactory progress in the course the placement may be terminated and result in a Fail grade being awarded.

(22) A student who fails to attain satisfactory progress in the course in the stipulated timeframe will be notified (see Note 2) that they are continuing to be at risk of unsatisfactory progress in the course and will be referred to the Course Co-ordinator. Where the placement is not part of a course or the placement supervisor is the Course Co-ordinator the matter will be referred to the Head of School. The Program Convenor will be informed of each instance of unsatisfactory progress.

(23) When a student's progress has been deemed unsatisfactory the Course Co-ordinator/Head of School may:-

- a. Terminate the placement; and/or
- b. Approve an alternative placement opportunity for the student;
- c. and/or
- d. Recommend a Fail grade for the placement/course.

(24) In accordance with the Student Conduct Rule, where a student on placement is referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for concerning behaviour or non-academic misconduct the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) can, without limitation, place a student on enforced leave or suspension effective immediately, when a student's actions, statements or behaviour:

- a. Create a threat to the health, safety and/or welfare of the student or other people; and/or
- b. Create a threat to property, animals or the environment.

(25) The enforced leave process is as set out in section 11 of the Student Conduct Rule.

(26) The immediate suspension process is as set out in section 21 of the Student Conduct Rule.

(27) Notwithstanding the above clauses a placement agency has the right to terminate a placement at any time.

(28) Where a placement is unable to continue due to matters relating to the placement agency the Course Co-ordinator or the Head of School will:-

- a. Provide an alternative placement for the student; and
- b. Determine the length of the placement required to satisfy placement requirements for the course; or
- c. In collaboration with the program convenor recommend to the Pro Vice-Chancellor the length of the placement required to satisfy placement requirements for the program.

(29) Where a breakdown in the placement has occurred due to circumstances outside the control of the student the student will:-

- a. Notify the placement supervisor immediately of any problem encountered;
- b. Provide an application for Special Circumstances with appropriate documentation where personal circumstances are affecting the continuation of the placement.

Section 5 - Supporting Guidelines for Student

Placement Policy

Roles and Responsibilities of University Placement Supervisors and/or Course Co-ordinator

(30) This sub-clause was rescinded and superseded by Section 9.3 - Student Placements of the Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual from 1 January 2013.

(31) Prior to the commencement of the placement University staff responsible for supervising and/or coordinating placements will provide the student and the placement agency supervisor with:-

- a. the Course Outline, where the placement forms part or all of a course;
- b. how the placement fits into the learning objectives of the course and program and whether the placement is a requirement for relevant professional accreditation;
- c. the aims and objectives of the placement (if not included in the Course Outline) specifying the essential and desirable experiences and associated learning/development to be achieved by the end of the placement;
- d. where the placement is assessed:-
- e. the components of assessment, the marking methodology and how the placement assessment will contribute to the overall course;
- f. the assessment criteria including an indication of the minimum level of skills and competencies that need to be demonstrated by the student to be awarded a pass for the placement component of the Course;
- g. the University's expectations regarding placement supervisor, placement agency supervisor and student conduct for the placement including the roles and responsibilities as set out in these Guidelines;
- h. information regarding insurance cover for students during the placement;
- i. the opportunity for students, placement supervisors and placement agency supervisors to meet or make contact before the placement starts to discuss expectations and details of the placement including experience to be provided, work hours, days of work, work breaks, etc.;
- j. any additional guidance on the conduct of the placement that may be required, for example procedures in case of a breakdown in the placement or unsatisfactory performance (refer to the Procedures attached to this policy).

(32) University staff responsible for supervising and/or coordinating placements will provide for supervising staff especially placement agency supervisors:-

- a. regular workshops and/or information on methods of supervision and assessment;
- b. information regarding University policies and procedures relating to examination and continuous assessment requirements (this information should form part of supervisor training and be updated for trained staff on a regular basis);
- c. information regarding the University's appeals and grievance procedures as well as disability, equity, diversity and other relevant policies of the University; and
- d. where possible, regular meetings and/or other appropriate mechanism for all supervising staff, to provide an opportunity for the sharing of information and discussion of problems.

Roles and Responsibilities of Placement Agency Supervisors

(33) The University, before sending a student to a placement, will confirm with the placement agency supervisor (or another representative of the workplace):

- a. that the placement agency complies with OH&S legislation, and where appropriate that placement agency

supervisors have developed and will provide an OH&S induction for students;

- b. that the placement agency is insured to cover any legal and safety related liabilities associated with working as a placement agency supervisor; and
- c. that the placement agency supervisors are prepared to accept the responsibility and carry out the duties outlined by the University Placement Supervisors and/or Course Co-ordinators in accord with clauses 30 through 32 above.

(34) The Placement Agency Supervisors have a duty of care to the students.

Roles and Responsibilities of Students Undertaking Placement

(35) Students will not normally:-

- a. be permitted to arrange their own placements (see Note 3);
- b. be permitted to undertake placements at an agency where they are employed or have family or other close connections;

(36) Before the placement students will:-

- a. ensure that any program requirements, course requisites or compulsory course components by which eligibility to undertake placement is determined are completed prior to undertaking placements, for example, vaccinations, first aid certificate, successful completion of preparatory courses, workshops or tutorials;
- b. complete all required documentation, for example, Criminal Records Check, Commission for Children and Young People Working with Children Check - Student Declaration, health check information in accordance with directions from the School/Faculty responsible for the placement;
- c. formally disclose any disability which may affect the placement and for which they are seeking accommodations during the placement;
- d. provide consent for the release of necessary information to the placement agency if applying for adjustments for disclosed disabilities;
- e. make contact with the agency once they have been officially advised to do so.

(37) During the placement students will:-

- a. carry their University student ID at all times and wear identification and/or uniforms as directed;
- b. adhere to all by-laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the placement agency including any dress codes;
- c. maintain a level of conduct appropriate to a student in a professional setting and in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct;
- d. maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality regarding their placement experiences and information which they have gained through the placement, in accordance with privacy legislation requirements as they apply to the agency;
- e. inform both the placement agency supervisor and the University placement supervisor of any absences from the placement;
- f. actively participate in any instruction, training or information sessions provided by the placement agency;
- g. follow any instruction or rules as defined by the placement agency;
- h. complete and/or provide any required documentation relating to absence from the placement, for example, Doctor's certificate;
- i. advise the placement supervisor immediately of any incident or concern regarding their safety and well-being during the placement.

Withdrawal from Placement

(38) Other than in exceptional circumstances approved by the Head of School, a student may not withdraw from a placement or a course containing a placement after a date determined by the Head of School and advised in the Course Outline.

Assessment of Students Undertaking Placements

(39) Assessment of students undertaking placements will reflect the stated Course/placement objectives and be based on evidence supplied by the principal participants – student, placement supervisor and placement agency supervisor, as appropriate.

(40) The assessment mechanisms should encourage students to reflect upon their own learning and performance by use of log books, diaries and frequent contact with the placement supervisor and/or the placement agency supervisor.

(41) Assessment procedures will ensure that students are provided with feedback during the placement regarding their progress towards the learning objectives of the placement (see Note 2).

(42) Assessment procedures will ensure as far as possible that all students are treated equally regardless of the perceived quality of the placement.

(43) At the end of placements students will receive formal written feedback on the placement from the placement supervisor and/or the placement agency supervisor (see Note 2).

(44) Students will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the placement. This may be by way of the SFT, SFC or other appropriate questionnaire.

Notes:

1. Placements which are not coordinated by the University but form an ungraded part of a course or program requirement must comply with the Compulsory Course Component Procedure.
2. Where written notification or feedback are required, this may take the form of a handwritten record of meeting or an email confirmation (via student mail) of consultation at, or immediately following discussions with the student.
3. Specific placement guidelines may be provided by Schools/Faculties regarding the allocation of placements.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Lisa Wood Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Lisa.Wood@newcastle.edu.au
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