JMP - Student Placement Policy

Section 1 - Context

(1) This policy applies only to students enrolled in the Joint Medical Program (JMP) and will ensure that:

a. there is appropriate consistency and Quality Assurance in the management and administration of placements across the Joint Medical Program;
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 Universities are not rendered liable for any conduct by either a student or placement supervisor during an external placement; and
e. reasonable accommodations are made for students with disabilities.

Section 2 - Definitions

(2) In the context of this document:

a. Joint Medical Program (JMP) means the Bachelor of Medicine or the Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine, as delivered in partnership by University of Newcastle and University of New England;
b. JMP Progress and Appeals Committee means the Committee established to jointly consider and make determinations regarding the progress of JMP students at the University of Newcastle (UON) and the University of New England (UNE);
c. Course/Unit Coordinator means the officers responsible for the delivery of a Course/Unit and for ensuring its appropriate content and assessment as approved by the JMP Teaching and Learning Committee. The Coordinators assigned to a Course/Unit at UON and UNE will consult with the Program Convenors and the Heads of School as appropriate. Final responsibility for delivery of the Course/Unit rests with the Dean of Medicine - Joint Medical Program (JMP);
d. Dean means the Dean of Medicine - Joint Medical Program (JMP);
e. JMP Teaching and Learning Committee means the joint UON/UNE committee responsible for the planning, implementation and management of the JMP including curriculum, assessment and standards;
f. misconduct means unacceptable behaviour that includes, but is not limited to, conduct that:
    i. engages in unlawful or criminal activity on the premises of the placement agency; or
    ii. disrupts, interferes with, or is detrimental to the conduct of the agency; or
    iii. obstructs any officer or employee of the placement agency in the performance of their duties; or
    iv. damages or wrongfully deals with any property on a location where a student is present under the auspices of the University; or
    v. disobeys, without reasonable cause, any instruction of an officer of the University or placement agency, including the failure to leave any building or part of a building when directed to do so; or
    vi. refuses, withholds, or fails to identify oneself truthfully or furnishes false personal information to any officer of the placement agency; or

vii. disobeys or fails, without reasonable cause, to observe any policy, procedure, or regulation of the placement agency; or
viii. assaults or threatens a peron, or causes others to fear for their personal safety; or
ix. breaches confidentiality or privacy requirements or obligations in respect of the placement agency, its staff, or other relevant parties.

g. placement means a clinical placement, practicum, internship and any other like form of professional, industrial or vocational experience included in a course/unit or required for the Joint Medical Program;
h. placement supervisor means an approved health practitioner or member of the Universities' academic staff responsible for the supervision and assessment of students undertaking placements included in a course/unit;
i. Course/Unit Coordinator means the officers who are jointly responsible for the delivery of a Course/Unit and for ensuring its appropriate content and assessment as approved by the JMP Teaching and Learning Committee. The Coordinators assigned to a Course/Unit at UON and UNE will consult with the Program Convenors and the Heads of School as appropriate. Final responsibility for delivery of the Course/Unit rests with the Dean of Medicine - Joint Medical Program (JMP).
j. Head of School means the Head of School of Medicine and Public Health at UON and/or the Head of School of Rural Medicine at UNE who is/are responsible for delivery of approved MEDI Course/Units;
k. placement agency means an agency or body which provides placements for students of the JMP;
l. placement agency supervisor means a member of staff of a placement agency who is responsible for supervising and/or contributing to the assessment of students on placement;
m. School means the School of Medicine and Public Health at UON and the School of Rural Medicine at UNE;
n. University means the University of Newcastle and/or the University of New England;
o. UON means the University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act, 1989;
p. UNE means the University of New England;
q. unprofessional conduct means behaviour that is not characteristic of or befitting the profession; it includes but is not limited to conduct that:
    i. is unethical;
    ii. departs from the standards set by the profession;
    iii. uses language that is unacceptable in the presence of co-workers, supervisors of clients; or
    iv. demonstrates a lack of respect or sensitivity to clients.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This policy relates to all clinical, professional, industrial or other placements that form part of the Joint Medical Program 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 Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine or the Bachelor of Medicine.

Section 4 - 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 the Guidelines contained in this policy – Section 6).

(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 course/units or program schedule requirements;
c. the completion by students of any additional requirements, for example, vaccinations, first aid certificate, essential criteria or course/unit requisites;
d. the provision by students of any required documentation, for example, National Criminal Record Check, Office of the Children's Guardian Working with Children Check – Student Declaration (as relevant to the placement setting) or health checks;
e. procedures for completing a pre-placement risk assessment;
f. procedures for students with disabilities seeking to negotiate adjustments;
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/unit 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;
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 JMP Teaching and Learning Committee and advised in the Course/Unit outline after which a student may not withdraw from a course/unit containing a placement without academic penalty other than in exceptional circumstances and with approval of the Head of School in consultation with the Dean of Medicine - Joint Medical Program (JMP).

(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) All students undertaking a placement will be provided with an induction prior to the commencement of their placement by their agency, this should also include participation in safety training.

(8) All students undertaking a placement will be in regular communication with their agency and/or School supervisors.

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

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

(11) Placement agencies, placement agency supervisors, placements supervisors and students will be advised of their responsibilities under Anti-Discrimination, WH&S and Privacy legislation and the Universities risk assessment policies.

Section 5 - Procedures for Addressing Student Placement

Placements for Students with Disabilities

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

(13) 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.

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

(15) The Placement Supervisor and/or the Course/Unit Coordinator will:

a. in conjunction with the Universities Disability Support Services, ensure that an accurate assessment of the implications of the student's disability and the requirements of the placement is conducted;
b. in conjunction with the Program Convenor, identify the inherent requirements of the placement in relation to the course/unit and the program;
c. in conjunction with the Universities' Disability Support Services and the Program Convenor, determine how the essential requirements of the course/unit 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 WH&S, duty of care and legal liability particularly in the context of Anti-Discrimination, WH&S and Privacy legislation are assessed. The Universities and the placement agency have a right to refuse a placement if it considers that there is a danger to the student or 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

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

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

(18) 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/unit; and/or
c. failed to maintain an appropriate standard of conduct, may be identified as at risk of failing to maintain satisfactory progress in the course/unit.

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

(20) A student identified as at risk of unsatisfactory progress will be notified in writing by the school placement supervisor who will:

a. indicate why they are at risk of failing to maintain satisfactory progress in the course/unit;
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/unit the placement may be terminated and result in a Fail grade being awarded.

(21) A student who fails to attain satisfactory progress in the course/unit in the stipulated timeframe will be notified that they are continuing to be at risk of unsatisfactory progress in the course/unit and will be referred to the Course/Unit Coordinator.

(22) The Course/Unit Coordinator/Head of School in consultation with the Program Convenor, may:

a. terminate the placement; and/or
b. approve an alternative placement opportunity for the student; and/or
c. recommend a Fail grade for the placement/course/unit.

(23) Where a student on placement is involved in a case of gross misconduct or in unprofessional misconduct of a serious nature the student may be immediately withdrawn from the placement and failed in the course/unit by the Head of School.

(24) A student whose placement in a course/unit is terminated may appeal in writing within 14 days of the termination date of the placement. If the termination is authorised by the Course/Unit Coordinator, the appeal should be lodged with the Head of School who shall consult with the Dean of Medicine - Joint Medical Program (JMP). If the termination is authorised by the Head of School, the appeal should be lodged with the JMP Progress and Appeals Committee.

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

(26) Where a placement is unable to continue due to matters relating to the placement agency the Program Convenor in consultation with the Course/Unit Coordinator or 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/unit; or
c. determine the length of the placement required to satisfy placement requirements for the program.

(27) 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 under the JMP Adverse and Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Procedure with appropriate documentation where personal circumstances are affecting the continuation of the placement.

Section 6 - Supporting Guidelines for Student Placement Policy

Roles and Responsibilities of School Placement Supervisors and/or Course/Unit

Coordinators

(28) School staff responsible for supervising and/or coordinating placements will ensure that:

a. there are explicit procedures for allocating students to placements;
b. students are eligible to undertake placement in accordance with the schedule and/or approved program/course/unit requirements, for example, course/unit requisites and/or essential criteria;
c. mechanisms are in place to enable, where appropriate, individualised learning goals for each student;
d. all required documentation, health checks, etc, for example, Office of the Children's Guardian Working with Children Check – Student Declaration, National Criminal Record Check or insurance have been completed by students;
e. students who have identified themselves as having a disability which may affect the placement have had an assessment of the impact of the disability on the placement and the opportunity to negotiate accommodations with placement agencies and supervisors;
f. that placement agency supervisors are professionals in the field preferably with at least two years professional experience, or an appropriate level of equivalent clinical/professional/industrial experience;
g. placement agency supervisors have been provided with information regarding their roles and responsibilities and are able to meet the expectations set out in this policy;
h. placement agency supervisors conduct an induction with the student including information relating to WHS and privacy legislation requirements for the placement agency;
i. placement agency supervisors provide the student with access to shared office space and a desk (when appropriate and available);
j. placement agency supervisors are insured with appropriate contracts in place to cover any legal and safety related liabilities associated with working as a placement agency supervisor;
k. the students' progress is systematically monitored during the course/unit of the placement and that School staff and student support systems are available to students during the placement; and
l. that the students keep a log of the work undertaken in the placement. This log may be used as an assessment item and/or an essential criterion for the course/unit (refer to the Essential Criteria In Course/Unit Assessment Policy).

(29) Prior to the commencement of the placement provide the student and the placement agency supervisor with:

a. the Course/Unit Outline;
b. how the placement fits into the learning objectives of the course/unit 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/Unit Outline) specifying the essential and desirable experiences and associated learning / development to be achieved by the end of the placement;
d. the location where the placement is assessed;
e. the components of assessment, the marking methodology and how the placement assessment will contribute to the overall course/unit;
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/Unit;
g. the Universities' expectations regarding placement supervisor, placement agency supervisor and student conduct for the placement including the roles and responsibilities as set out in the 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).

(30) 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 Universities' appeals and grievances procedures as well as disability, equity, diversity, and other relevant policies of the Universities; 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

(31) The School, 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 WH&S legislation;
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 School Placement Supervisors and/or Course/unit Coordinators in accordance with Clause 28 above.
d. the Placement Agency supervisors have a duty of care to the students.

Roles and Responsibilities of Students Undertaking Placement

(32) Students will not normally:

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

(33) Before the placement students will:

a. ensure that any program requirements, course/unit requisites, essential criteria or milestones by which eligibility to undertake placement is determined are completed prior to undertaking placements, for example, vaccinations, first aid certificate, successful completion of preparatory course/units, workshops or tutorials;
b. complete all required documentation, for example, contract approvals, National Criminal Record Check, Office of the Children's Guardian Working with Children Check – Student Declaration, health check information in accordance wih directions from the School responsible for the placement, particularly in relation to timelines that allow sufficient time for approvals to be obtained;
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.

(34) 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 their 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 School placement supervisor of any absences from the placement;
f. complete and/or provide any required documentation relating to absence from the placement, for example, Doctor's certificate;
g. advise the placement supervisor immediately of any incident or concern regarding their safety and well-being during the placement.

Withdrawal from Placement

(35) Other than in exceptional circumstances approved by the Head of School, a student may not withdraw from a placement or a course/unit containing a placement after a date determined by the JMP Teaching and Learning Committee and advised in the Course/Unit Outline.

Assessment of Students Undertaking Placements

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

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

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

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

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

(41) Students will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the placement.

Section 7 - Supporting Document

(42) UON Student Professional Experience Policy

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Belinda Yourn Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
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