University of Southern Queensland

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Placement Guide for Social Work Students

Master of Social Work (Qualifying)
School of Psychology and Wellbeing

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University of Southern Queensland

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Introduction to Placement

Professional placement is an integral part of your degree and is a co-operative effort between an agency to which the student has been allocated and the University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ). Professional placement is designed to augment UniSQ coursework and to provide students with the opportunities to develop their personal skills and professional understandings. Professional placement also allows the student to demonstrate their competence and to translate theory and example into placement. Please note that there is no direct correlation between a placement and employment in placement organisations.

This guide has been compiled to provide students with information pertinent to undertaking and completing professional placement components embedded in their program of study. It includes information about professional placement requirements, expectations, behaviour, conduct and responsibilities. To ensure students are well prepared and eligible to participate in professional placements please read this document carefully and contact the Work Integrated Learning Team or your Field Education and Networking Coordinator if you have any questions. It is within the right of the University and the agency to stop a placement if these guidelines are not followed.

Contacts

The WIL Team or The Academic Team should be your first point of contact for any placement related questions.

The Work Integrated Learning Team

The Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Team consists of WIL Officers and WIL Support Staff in Toowoomba, Ipswich and Springfield. The team is responsible for:

- liaising with agencies and the Academic Team to source and allocate placements
- reviewing and verifying mandatory documents for placement
- notifying students of important deadlines and placement information

The WIL Team can support you with questions or problems you may have when preparing for and attending a professional placement. You can contact iConnect or the WIL Team via online chat through our website, phone, or email.

Email: WIL@unisq.edu.au
Chat: Chat to us
Phone: (07) 4631 2359

The Academic Team

The Academic Team members associated with professional experience are listed in the table below. Their roles are to:

- assist students with performance related concerns and professional issues surrounding professional placement
- discuss any non-compliance with mandatory requirements with students
- address any placement agency notifications relating to performance concerns that are breaches of safety, professional or ethical boundaries

The Field Education and Networking Coordinator are located at the Ipswich Campus but can be contacted by making an appointment either by email or phone.

Position	Email
Field Education and Networking Coordinator (Social Work and Human Services) Acting Program Director (Master of Social Work Qualifying)	TBA Niki.Edwards@unisq.edu.au
Course Coordinator of SWM5500 Social Work Field Education 1 & SWM6550 Social Work Field Education 2	See StudyDesk site for trimester information

Placement Course Specifications

The course specifications provide information on each course approved for the University's teaching program. Download your course specification and become familiar with what you must do if you plan to obtain a passing grade in the course. Students should also ensure they have satisfied the pre-requisite, co-requisite and other requisite requirements for each course. If in doubt, contact the Enrolments Team. Further information about your placement courses can be found in the UniSQ Handbook and on the StudyDesk sites.

Program Placement Requirements

All UniSQ social work students are required to undertake two field education placements during their degree - SWM5500 Social Work Field Education 1 & SWM6550 Social Work Field Education 2. Each placement comprises 500 hours, with supervision provided by a social worker

Field education aims to develop students' skills, knowledge and skills to enable the graduate social work practitioner to be capable of meeting AASW Practice Standards. UniSQ Social Work field education consists of:

- Pre-placement workshops prior to each field education placement
- Two 500-hour placements (cannot be completed consecutively) supervised by qualified and experienced social workers
- Three integrative workshops conducted throughout each placement to help integrate classroom learning with students' practice on placement
- Completion of a learning plan, inclusive of mid and final placement reports showcasing learning activities and timesheets (each placement).

AASW Requirements in relation to Placements (ASWEAS 2021)

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) is the profession's body that establishes and maintains standards of professional conduct for social workers educated in Australia. It also managed social workers who are seeking to work in Australia. One of its functions is to undertake the professional accreditation of social work university courses of study to ensure that they to equip entry- level social workers to practice safely and effectively; and making them eligible for membership of the AASW.
The requirements that each program must meet are outlined in the Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards (ASWEAS) which are informed by the principles, values and professional competencies outlined in the AASW Code of Ethics (2020 and the AASW Practice Standards (2023).

ASWEAS (2021) outlines a detailed list of requirements for field education policies and processes embedded in the social work program and described in various sections of this Field Education Manual.

The major requirements of the ASWEAS (2021) which UniSQ social work programs comply with are:

- Students will complete 1,000 hours of professional practice learning involving no more than three placements.
- Students have at least two placements which will involve distinctly different practice learning experiences.
- At least 500 hours of placement experience must be undertaken in Australia.
- No placement will be less than 250 hours.
- 500 hours of placement time will be undertaken in a direct practice role involving the application of professional interpersonal skills.
- Students will complete at least one placement in a professional practice setting with an onsite social work field educator.
- Students in employment will not have a placement in their current work role or under their current supervisor.
- All placements will involve the active involvement of the student in social work roles.

Definitions of Key Terms

Professional Placement (Field Education): the placement of a student at an agency for the purposes of gaining practical experience in the profession of their study.

Field Education and Networking Coordinator (Social Work and Human Services): – *May be referred to as Placement Coordinator:* The suitably qualified employee of UniSQ who is employed to organise, coordinate and/or supervise the professional placement arrangements and/or experience of students enrolled in an approved course.

Course Coordinator*:* The academic responsible for teaching and supporting students through the relevant placement course content or theorical components.

Work Integrated Learning Officer: The administrative employees of the University who are members of the Work Integrated Learning Team.

Agency: An organisation that provides structured and supervised practical experience for students for the purposes of enhancing their work readiness.

Field Educator (or onsite Supervisor): A suitably qualified individual who has been nominated by the agency to supervise the student while undertaking professional placement. The Field Educator is an agency based, qualified social work practitioner with a minimum of two years (FTE) post-qualifying practice experience and eligible for AASW membership.

External Field Educator: A suitably qualified employee of the university who may be employed to supervise students while undertaking professional placement. An external field Supervisor is usually employed when the agency does not have a qualified supervisor within agency.

Field Liaison: A suitably qualified professional who may be employed by the university to pay field visit to the agencies from time to time. The Field Liaison is a School of Psychology and Wellbeing academic who will be an experienced Social Worker with at least five years of professional experience, eligible for membership with the AASW.

InPlace: Online platform for placement-related information (mandatory documents, placement allocation details, student timesheets), accessed via inplace.usq.edu.au.

Period of Study: Refers to model of study chosen for the program/course e.g. Semester, Trimester etc.

Mandatory Document Requirements and Resources

Important Dates

It is important that you plan and prepare for your placements. To assist with this, the WIL Team provide you with an 'Important Dates' document which is available on your program Placement Hub. This document provides you with all the keys dates that need to be adhered to ensure your placement allocation and commencement goes smoothly.

Placement Hub

The Placement Hub is where you will find all the forms, links and information you require to prepare for your placements. It can be found with your other StudyDesks or under 'My Courses' on UConnect under 'Other'. Students are expected to access this information and ensure that they plan their enrolment in placement subjects and submission of mandatory documents to ensure they are able to be placed in their nominated study period of enrolment. It is important that you use this site to support your success.

Mandatory Document Information

UniSQ is required by the placement provider or accrediting body to collect documents for each student, ensuring that they are completed correctly and valid for the duration of each placement. Students must ensure they provide and update these documents via InPlace before each placement. You will not be allocated nor permitted to commence placement until all mandatory documents and requirements have been completed and updated.

You are encouraged to start preparing and completing your mandatory documents from your enrolment into the program as some documents, such as a Blue Card or NDIS Card, may take several weeks to complete. Please ensure you take this into consideration when planning for your placement. The WIL Team monitors mandatory documents closely when allocating placements. We recommend that you upload your documents as soon as you receive/complete them so your preparation for placement can be easily viewed.

You must provide all your documents by the due date on the Important Dates document so they can be checked and verified by the WIL Team. Should you not meet the deadline your placement may be delayed or even cancelled. You may also be dropped from the placement course for the period of study if sufficient progress has not been made. If you have circumstances that impact on your ability to have your mandatory documents completed on time, this **MUST** be discussed with the Field Education and Networking Coordinator and WIL Team before the cut-off date.

Please be aware that some documents only need to be submitted once, before your first placement, while others have an expiry date and need to be updated throughout your studies. You will be required to plan ahead and ensure that any expiring documents are updated by the due dates throughout the duration of your program. At times, UniSQ is required to provide some or all of your mandatory document information to the placement provider for placement purposes.

There is a discipline specific list of mandatory documents available on your Placement Hub. You can also refer to the Placement Hub for further information and links on how to complete these requirements. If you have any questions about your mandatory documents and how to complete them, please contact the WIL Team.

InPlace – UniSQ Placement Management System

InPlace is the cloud-based placement system used by UniSQ to electronically allocate and manage professional placements. Once you enrol in your first-year courses in the program, an InPlace file is created for you in the system overnight refresh. You can then log in using the above link and your UniSQ log in and password. InPlace can also be accessed via a link on your program's Placement Hub.

InPlace is where:

- All of your mandatory documents must be uploaded for verification.
- You complete your pre-placement form (instructions for this available on Placement Hub on Studydesk)
- Placement confirmation/allocation details will be released.
- Your placement status will be seen as 'confirmed' on InPlace. *This status has nothing to do with your grades or graduation eligibility so you will not be affected if it is not updated as soon as you complete the placement.*

There is a 10 minute **video** and written instructions about how to navigate InPlace available on the Placement Hub. These will inform you how to upload your documents, how to submit preferences and access important information.

Tips –

InPlace

- Once you upload your documents on the 'My Details' page, InPlace will send the WIL Team a message to review and 'verify' that they are correct. There is no need to advise the team that these have been uploaded.
- Go back and check a couple of days later that they have been approved or read the comment on your To-Do list on the home page to see why they were rejected
- Checking the details page of your InPlace file is a quick way of finding out when your documents will expire - make sure they are kept current for all your placements, including looking ahead on documents that expire to check they will be valid for an entire Study Period. You cannot rely on the 'traffic light' system as this only alerts you once a document is *very* close to expiring.
- InPlace works best with Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox.
- If your placement is not released or has been hidden from your view, you may need to update one or more mandatory documents. Placements are not confirmed until they are published on InPlace.

Placement Eligibility

For students to be eligible to attend placement they must:

- meet the program's inherent requirements
- pass any pre-requisite courses for the placement course/s
- enroll in the placement course
- provide all mandatory documents within the specified timeframes
- be allocated a confirmed placement via InPlace
- prepare for orientation and first day arrangements
- provide any additional specific requirements requested by the placement agency within the specific timeframes

Pre-requisite Course and Enrolments

Prior to enrolling in placement courses, students need to read the course specifications to be aware of the placement requirements which are set by the University and/or accrediting body. Please be aware that some placement courses must be undertaken sequentially (cannot be enrolled in more than one placement course in a same study period unless it is written into the program progression).

To attend or remain on placement, students must have met all academic pre-requisite requirements for the placement course. Incomplete results for theory courses are not considered to have met the pre-requisite requirements. However, in some disciplines, students may be able to commence placement with an incomplete result for a pre-requisite placement course. If students receive a fail grade for a pre-requisite course and have already commenced placement, they will be asked to stop placement. In this situation, any completed hours will not be counted towards the placement.

Late enrolments or not submitting mandatory documents in time may make it impossible to source or allocate a placement in the enrolled period of study timeframe.

If you have questions about your course progression or pre-requisites for a placement course according to UniSQ Pre-Requisite procedures, please contact iConnect or the UniSQ Enrolments Team.

Recognition of Prior Learning

At UniSQ, we want to help you on your journey at university and recognising your prior learning and work experience is just one way we can do that. Recognition of prior learning is a process that assesses formal and informal learning and work experience in the field to determine the extent to which an individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes or standards to warrant exemption from a particular course. Some programs may have restrictions on the number of exemptions able to be granted for placement experience.

Relevant work experience may be recognised as credit for the first placement course; partial recognition is not possible. Students may not use a previous placement experience as credit for a first placement. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment process requires appropriate evidence and documentation that aligns with ASWEAS (2021) and TEQSA requirements. Only one placement can be work-based. If RPL has been granted for the first placement unit, students are not eligible for a work-based placement for their second/final placement unit. This is so that placements can uphold the AASW requirement for the variety of settings of practice experience.

Guidelines are provided in Appendix C for students applying for RPL for field placements. Further information on recognition of prior learning and the process to apply is also available here.

Inherent Requirements

UniSQ is required to ensure that a student has the capacity to perform the functional requirements of the course and can behave safely and ethically in their placement. The Work Integrated Learning team works closely with the Field Education and Networking Coordinator to manage the processes associated with the administration of placements.

Students must be aware of the inherent requirements to undertake the social work degrees. Information on the inherent requirements specific to your program of study can be accessed in the UniSQ Handbook, or students are able to request an appointment to discuss this with Program Director for the Master of Social Work. Please ensure you read and understand the inherent requirements before enrolling in a placement course. For further information contact our Student Equity Officers.

Fitness for Placement

If you are aware of any chronic or acute injury, illness or condition that may affect you during your placement, or any other factor that may impact your capacity to practice the profession or engage in placement, please contact the WIL Team and/or the Program Director prior to placement allocation and as early in the program as possible. It is likely that you will be asked to provide a Fitness for Practice certificate (signed by a medical practitioner) prior to commencing a placement.

Concerns regarding fitness to practice may arise due to, but not limited to the following:

- A health condition or disability – (chronic or transient) that is likely to affect your capacity to undertake placement or practice in the profession.
- Inability to meet, or disregard for, the compliance requirements of UniSQ, the placement agency or of the broader profession.
- Failure to satisfactorily complete the pre-requisite courses for the placement course/s.
- Conduct and/or performance that is inconsistent with acceptable standards for your chosen profession.

Sometimes your personal situation (family, financial, legal etc.) or health could change over the duration of your studies. This can impact on whether you are still able to meet the program conditions. If your situation does change, please notify your Program Director to discuss whether you are 'fit for placement'. Any information you provide will be treated with discretion. You can also seek advice and guidance from a Student Equity Officer at disabilitysupport@unisq.edu.au.

Impairments and Criminal Charges (Unsuitability to hold general registration)

If you have an impairment or a criminal charge listed against you on your National Police Check, you may not be eligible for a placement.

An 'impairment' is defined under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as a

- physical or mental impairment,
- disability,
- condition or disorder (including substance abuse or dependence),

that detrimentally affects or is likely to detrimentally affect capacity to safely practice the profession or a student's capacity to undertake clinical training as part of the approved program of study in which the student is enrolled or as arranged by an education provider.

National Boards may place conditions on your registration to ensure that you are able to practice safely if an impairment or criminal history is applicable to you. If you do have a severe impairment or criminal history, you should check with your National Board that they will register you on completion of your program.

UniSQ is committed to making reasonable adjustments to enable students to participate in their degree. Reasonable adjustments must not fundamentally change the nature of the inherent requirement.

If you have a health/disability issue that could impair your ability to do a placement, please contact the Equity and Diversity office. On occasion, depending on the situation, it may be necessary for the University to share this information with an agency for them to confirm whether they are able to provide a suitable placement for you. Any information you provide or that is released to a placement provider will be treated with discretion and in line with the privacy policy of the University.

Reasonable Placement Adjustments for Academic Progression

Any student with a disability who may require alternative academic arrangements in the program and/or specific arrangements for placement is encouraged to seek advice from the WIL Team or the Field Education and Networking Coordinator. If a Learning Support Plan has already been devised, it may need review in relation to placement requirements and further consultation with the Program Director and/or Academic Team. Please note that all adjustments are made as per the UniSQ Students with a Disability Policy and Procedure. You can review the document here policy.

Before Placement Allocations are available

Pre-Placement Form

Placement students need to complete the Social Work Pre-placement Form as the information assists the WIL team with placement planning and allocation. This form is to be submitted electronically via InPlace as part of the mandatory compliance process. This must be submitted, with resume by the due dates set out in the Important Dates document in the period of study preceding commencement of placement.

Pregnancy

If you become pregnant during your study, you will not be able to do a placement for 6 weeks either side of your estimated due date. If you are enrolled in a placement course in the trimester when you are due to give birth, you must notify the WIL Team or your Field Education and Networking Coordinator, so you can be placed in an appropriate timeframe. Please notify them via email including a letter from your doctor with your estimated due date and confirmation of your fitness to complete placement while pregnant.

If you are planning a pregnancy, you will need to have any required immunisations before you become pregnant. If you have not been immunised or do not have immunity and are already pregnant, you may not be able to have some immunisations until after you have given birth. Please contact with the WIL Team to discuss your situation and your capacity to attend placement.

Conflict of Interest

You must notify the WIL Office and the Field Education and Networking Coordinator of any real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest (COI), which includes being allocated to a site:

- where you currently work;
- where you currently work and the only suitably qualified supervisor available is your colleague or superior;
- where you have a previous or current relationship with the supervisor;

You are also required to disclose any conflict of interest that may arise in relation to successfully undertaking or completing the academic requirements of the degree program. This may include, but is not limited to, any financial dealings or interests, participation in organisations, political parties or religious groups, which may influence clinical or academic decisions. You can provide COI information via your InPlace profile.

Working While on Placement

Due to professional and ethical responsibility, you are expected to be well rested and well prepared for placement. Working full or part time hours while on placement may be placing yourself at risk under work health and safety legislation and you may need to consider taking leave from work to achieve placement requirements.

Rural and Remote Placements

UniSQ has a strong commitment to attracting and supporting students from regional, rural and remote Australia. There is opportunity to nurture place-based non-urban placement opportunities. Students can indicate their preference for rural, regional and remote placement when starting the placement allocation process with the WIL team. UniSQ supports students as much as is possible to complete placements in agencies in their geographical location, so long as the ASWAS (2021) requirements can be met.

Overseas Placement

The AASW makes some provisions for social work students to undertake one of their placements in an overseas setting, consistent with ASWEAS (2021). This opportunity allows students to have exposure to fields of practice that are otherwise unavailable in a generic Australian-based placement and to experience different practices context that expand socio- cultural understanding and appreciation.

Overseas placements, particularly those located in the Global South, require specific types of arrangements and careful consideration. If students are considering an international placement, they should organise a meeting with the Field Education and Networking Coordinator. International placements will be decided on a case-by-case basis. The social work supervisor must meet the same requirements and qualifications as a local supervisor (with a minimum of two years practice experience, eligible for membership either of the AASW or the equivalent professional association), many countries require payment for supervising a student, and the agency's activities may not constitute appropriate social work tasks that meet the learning objectives of each placement course.

Further, the ASWEAS (2021) requires the onsite international placement will be managed in conjunction with an appropriate in-country auspice such as an in-country accredited social work education program. The program provider must appoint a staff member to liaise directly with their international counterpart.

Pre-Placement Requirements

Preplacement workshops are an important aspect of placement courses. They feature in field education pre-requisite courses to provide detailed information and knowledge building around the following topics:

- Structuring learning on placement
- Emphasising critically reflective learning
- Expectations
- The supervisory relationships in placement
- Assessment during placement
- Troubleshooting

Placement Allocation Process

To ensure that students gain maximum benefit from their professional experience, UniSQ has developed processes that ensure consistent governance of professional activities and quality learning outcomes applicable to professionals. Pre-placement planning has a number of stages involving communication with students, and agencies offering placements; these processes usually begin well before the commencement of the study period. If you work in an agency, you must advise the WIL Team via InPlace as soon as possible as this may impact your placement allocation.

Students will be allocated to a placement based on several specific criteria including, but not limited to:

- Mandatory document submission status
- Accessibility to appropriate agencies
- Availability of appropriate tasks and learning opportunities in the agency
- Student learning needs and capabilities
- Student area of practice interest
- Geographical location and transportation
- Performance at pre-allocation interview (if required by the agency or Field Educator)
- Specific agency requirements
- AASW guidelines for field education
- Supervision requirements
- in the case of the final placement, diversity from the student's previous placement

Students may indicate their interest in a field of practice or a specific agency, but they do not have the option to propose their preferences. It is important for students to remember that the MSW(Q) is a generalist degree, equipping them with transferrable skills to work in any entry area of social work practice at graduation. While students may be placed in area of interest they have specified, UniSQ's main objective is to allocate students two placements as per the ASWEAS (2021) specifications, for them to graduate with an accredited degree. Due to the number of students undertaking placement across our degrees and campuses, it is impossible to satisfy every student placement preference.

Placement opportunities are sourced by the WIL Team and/or Field Education and Networking Coordinator. **Students are not permitted to find or arrange their own placements.** UniSQ supports many placement relationships and has established agreements and contracts with agencies that provide quality learning opportunities as per the ASWEAS. If students are aware of a placement opportunity within an agency or have placement site suggestions, they can provide this information to the WIL Team via email, and appropriate procedures will be then followed. You are not permitted to contact a site unless you receive written approval from the Field Education and Networking Coordinator or WIL Officer to do so.

Local placements are defined as within a one-hour drive of your address provided on InPlace (as per Google maps) or preferred region. This does not mean you will definitely receive a placement within this radius as facilities only offer a certain number of placements at one time. Please be aware that you may be required to travel longer distances than this to attend placement. All students are required to complete placements across several sites or disciplines to gain a breadth of experience.

Your placement will not be released on **InPlace** until you have submitted all mandatory documents and they have been verified. Once your placement has been confirmed, you will be able to see the details of where you have been placed on InPlace.

Placement Allocation Communication

All email communication will be via the UniSQ email account. It is a student's responsibility to check their emails, StudyDesk and InPlace to ensure they are up to date on the placement allocation process and meet their responsibilities in a timely manner. Students may send their queries through to the Field Education and Networking Coordinator or WIL@unisq.edu.au.

Pre-placement Interviews

Once an appropriate placement has been located, negotiated and accepted by the university, you will be informed and advised of the next steps via your UniSQ email account. Some facilities may wish to interview you prior to agreeing to take you for placement. The WIL Officer will provide you with an appointment date and time, or the agency will contact you directly to discuss a suitable time. **In preparation for the interview, you are expected to research the agency and its role in the community and consider how you can contribute to the agency during your placement. You must also present yourself in a professional manner for the interview.**

Students must inform the WIL Officer about the outcome of the interview through WIL@unisq.edu.au.

The purpose of a pre-placement interview encompasses the following:

- To convey to the Field Educator that students are serious about their placement, are interested in the work of the agency and that they have thought about how to best engage with the agency and areas for learning.
- For the Field Educator to introduce themselves to the student. This can include sharing professional background and reasons that have led the student to choose social work as their program of study.
- To gain an understanding of the work of the agency, potential learning opportunities, and activities students will be involved in.
- Identifying any questions students wish to ask the potential Field Educator, which might include how the Field Educator plans to support the student to develop culturally responsive practice in line with the AASW Practice Standards (2023)
- To clarify agency and student expectations about placements including supervision, placement practicalities and student learning goals

Where an Agency Declines a Student

Field agencies have discretion to decline students whom they deem unsuitable based on their presentation and/or capacity and/or demonstrated ability. In this situation, assessment will be made by WIL and the Field Education and Networking Coordinator in conjunction to determine the appropriate course of action.

Based on this assessment, a second placement opportunity can be arranged if an agency has declined the first placement. Should the student be unsuccessful at a second placement interview, the student will be required to withdraw and re-enrol in the placement course in the next available trimester.

Declining a Placement

A student is not able to decline a placement offer unless there is a Conflict of Interest (COI) or circumstances that align with the special circumstances policy. Students are encouraged to discuss their reasons with the Field Educator and Networking Coordinator or WIL Team. Pending the outcome of the discussion, the student may be provided with another placement opportunity. This placement may, however, be delayed to later in the trimester or the next trimester.

If a student declines a second placement, this may result in the student not being able to undertake placement that year or advise to withdraw and re-enrol in the placement course in the next available trimester. A meeting between the student, Program Director and/or Field Education and Networking Coordinator may be convened to assist the student to modify their program progression.

Placement Agreement

UniSQ must have an agreement in place with all facilities where students complete placement. It is the WIL Team's responsibility to ensure this is completed prior to the commencement of any placements. Should an agreement need to be established for your placement, you will be informed of its completion and your starting date for placement via your UniSQ email account once finalised.

Each agency will also be reviewed against a UniSQ Risk Assessment Tool to ensure it is a suitable placement opportunity and meets any program accreditation requirements.

Placement at Current Place of Employment

It may be possible for students to complete one placement in their workplace but there are strict guidelines outlined by ASWEAS (2021) that must be met. Before such an arrangement is considered, students should discuss the possibility with WIL who will liaise with the Field Education. The ASWEAS (2021) requirements for work-based placements are:

- Student must undertake a different role to their current work role and their Field Educator must not be their usual line manager or supervisor
- Students must have agreement from their workplace supervisor or manager that they are willing to support a work-based placement and can meet all of the learning requirements of a placement
- The Field Education and Networking Coordinator will assess each application. Further, the employer must agree to these conditions and that the student role will be protected from their normal work commitments. A work-based placement can be paid or unpaid, as negotiated by the student and their employer, and UniSQ informed in the student application for a work-based placement.

A form to apply for a work-based placement is accessible from the Placement Hub and must be submitted to the WIL team as part of pre-placement preparation and compliance.

After Placement Allocations are Available

Student Responsibilities

All aspects of the placement apart from organising the placement, is **YOUR** responsibility. This includes:

- arranging child-minding
- organising and paying for any costs associated with parking, travel and accommodation
- rearranging private work commitments, as placement is a priority
- submitting clinical bursary or SQRH funding requests if required

Accommodation and Travel Expectations

It is the student's responsibility to source and fund any accommodation required. If you are allocated a placement that requires accommodation or travel, there are opportunities to apply for funding to assist (see below).

Students are responsible for their own travel costs in getting to and from their placement. Public transport may be available to travel to your placement location, but students must check this before making placement requests. Students are encouraged to consider the capacity of their car to travel long distances and their confidence in driving to remote locations.

Scholarships and Bursaries

UniSQ offer a wide range of scholarships to assist with textbook, practical experience, accommodation, or living expenses. Some scholarships will be one-off payments, while others will continue for the length of your degree. Placement bursaries are also available to assist students who are undertaking their placement in rural or remote areas or away from where they usually reside and the associated costs.

Please refer to the UniSQ Scholarships website for more information about available scholarships, bursaries and the eligibility criteria.

Southern Queensland Rural Health

UniSQ works in collaboration with Southern Queensland Rural Health (SQRH) who can offer accommodation to Commonwealth supported students allocated to a South West Hospital and Health Service or Darling Downs Health rural placement. Further information can be found through their website.

Where hospital accommodation is full or unavailable, SQRH offer accommodation (where available) at no cost for Commonwealth supported students attending rural placements in Toowoomba, Kingaroy, Chinchilla, Roma, Goondiwindi, St George and Charleville. The accommodation is fully furnished and equipped, providing a 'home away from home' environment for students. Non-Commonwealth supported students can apply for SQRH accommodation where available and there will be a cost associated.

Students can register and apply for accommodation via https://www.sqrh.com.au/accommodation by clicking on the 'Apply Now' button.

SQRH can also provide subsidy for students to travel to and from their placement. Application are considered on a case by case basis. Please check the SQRH website for more information and to see what other support opportunities are available. Other support available from SQRH includes the opportunity to apply for funding via a bursary to help with costs for students on an extended placement (of 8 consecutive weeks or more). These bursaries are only available to Commonwealth supported students. SQRH also provide additional interprofessional learning opportunities, networking and activities to maximise your rural and remote placement.

Orientation Information

You are required to contact the Placement Supervisor prior to the commencement of placement to ensure that they are fully informed of the requirements and expectations of your placement. This is your opportunity to confirm the following details:

- Placement date - start and finish
- Placement physical address, supervisor name and contact details
- Time and place of initial meeting at the start of placement
- Additional pre-placement paperwork or reading requirements
- Placement schedule - days, start and finish times, allocated break times *(this may be discussed on the first day of placement)*
- Expected exposure, duties, and responsibilities *(this can also be discussed on the first day of placement)*
- Any special dress code relevant to the placement site
- Confirmation that the Placement Supervisor will complete an evaluation form, which is shared with the student and Field Education and Networking Coordinator.

Attending Placement

Attending Placement

Students are expected to attend 100% of their placement at the agreed times and in accordance with the agencies operating hours. Your placement takes priority over other work commitments. Please give your employer plenty of notice, so your employment does not impact on your ability to attend your shifts. Should you need to work for financial reasons while on placement it is your responsibility to manage your placement roster and any associated fatigue issues so that you do not put yourself (and/or other stakeholders) health at risk.

Hours for Attendance at Placement

Students are required to attend the placement setting for no less than four days a week unless negotiated by the student with the Field Education and Networking Coordinator. A minimum of three days per week may be negotiated if a student has exceptional circumstances. This will need to be communicated to the WIL Team via the Pre-Placement form and approved by the Field Education and Networking Coordinator prior to the placement allocation. If the days of attendance need to be re-negotiated after the commencement of the placement, students will need to contact the Field Liaison or WIL Team.

Part time placements are generally not available as careful consideration would be given to identification of an appropriate agency where an experience social work supervisor has agreed to a part-time placement. Many agencies will not want to take a part time student due to the type of work and the length of time the student would need to be on placement with the agency. If a student is successfully appointed a part time placement, they must be available for a 2 week full time block at the beginning of the placement to complete any orientation requirements.

Timesheets

Students must complete accurate, daily timesheets which are signed off by the Field Educator/s and available to the Field Liaison at each contact. Timesheets can be submitted via InPlace. Additional information can be found in the InPlace Guide available on the Placement Hub.

Requesting a Rostered Shift Change

If you have extenuating circumstances and need to request a shift change from your rostered shift while on placement, you can approach your supervisor to discuss any options available. If your placement is extended as result of the agreed arrangement you will need to notify to WIL Team via WIL@unisq.edu.au

Agency Requests that you Change a Shift

In some instances, the agency may request you change a shift or your roster. The reasons may be due to Workplace Health and Safety and/staff skill mix requirements. If a staff member requests you change a shift, you are **obligated to comply** with the request.

Reasonable Work Hours

The placement experience is intended to reflect the reality of the agency workplace and students will normally work the typical work hours for the placement agency. In general, students will work a minimum of a 7-hour workday. These may vary in different settings and require some weekend or evening work as part of placement. Visits to other agencies, home visits or other work-related tasks outside the agency are considered legitimate placement time. Students can count extended hours, or they may be able to take those extra hours as leave at the discretion of the supervisor. If the student or supervisor needs guidance, they should contact the Field Liaison in the first instance, and further advice from the WIL team and/or Field Education and Networking Coordinator if required.

It is important students understand the nature of the hours required by the placement prior to commencing placement. This involves careful planning and preparation around start and finish dates. The pre-placement workshop addresses these issues. Students should not undertake more than 35 hours per week. Accumulating time in lieu is not encouraged as students need to have a work/life balance for their own wellbeing and cannot be used to shorten the placement by more than a week. Breaks are not included in hours accrued (e.g. lunch breaks).

Absence While on Placement

Absences are only accepted due to illness or extenuating personal circumstances. If you are absent during a clinical placement, you must inform the agency and relevant staff members AND your Field Education and Networking Coordinator AND the UniSQ WIL Team immediately.

- If a student is absent from placement for three days or more, a medical certificate or statutory declaration (whichever is appropriate) must be provided to the WIL Team, **within 10 working days of the absence**.
- Except in extenuating circumstances (and at the discretion of the Course Coordinator), failure to meet the above conditions will result in the award of a **Fail-Not Participate grade**.

Make Up

Where you have not completed the required number of placement hours for the course, make-up hours will be necessary. Students are expected to make every effort to attend their placement and any make up days in the timeframe offered.

Public Holidays

Students are **not** permitted to work a public holiday if your supervisor is **not** working on that day, and there is not adequate support or supervision within the workplace.

Student Initiated Placement Withdrawal

Once a student has commenced a placement, if they have exceptional circumstances and wish to withdraw the student must obtain formal confirmation from the WIL Team before taking any action. The WIL Team will consult with the Field Educator and Field Education and Networking Coordinator before confirming the withdrawal. This is because the student's reasons for withdrawal need to be discussed to assess subsequent academic action that is appropriate to the circumstances.

Without prior confirmation from the WIL Team or Field Education and Networking Coordinator, withdrawal by the student may result in a Fail grade for the course.

Please be aware academic or financial penalties may apply depending on when in the study period you withdraw from placement.

Agency or Field Educator Initiated Placement Withdrawal

Agencies may request termination of a student's placement for a variety of reasons including changes in their capacity, availability or other operational reasons not associated with the student's performance (for example, lack of appropriate work experiences, staff changes or sickness/ill health of the Field Educator).

An Agency and / or a Field Educator may request to withdraw a student from a placement where:

- the student is consistently unable to perform satisfactorily with an appropriate or a reasonable level of supervision
- the student performs in a manner detrimental to the professional experience of other students
- the student breaches the legal, ethical or professional codes of the organisation providing the placement
- the student demonstrates gross negligence in the performance of an assigned duty
- the student behaves in a manner deemed to constitute misconduct or gross misconduct
- the student fails to disclose information prior to commencing placement that impacts on their ability to meet duty of care requirements to themselves and agency clients or staff.

Placement Termination and Failing Placement

Placement can be **terminated** if the agency cannot continue to accommodate a student or deliver the placement as per its agreement with UniSQ. Where the supervisor or agency terminates the student's placement for reasons unrelated to student performance, and before all required placement hours have been completed, every reasonable effort will be made to re-allocate the student in a timely manner, however it may lead to a delay in course and/or program completion.

If you cancel or do not arrive at an allocated placement with no explanation or appropriate evidence, you will receive either an FNP grade or be dropped from the course and have to re-enrol in a future semester. Students will not be re-allocated a placement in the same semester without appropriate evidence or explanation.

Other Reasons for Failing a Placement Course

- You do not upload current mandatory documents on InPlace by prescribed deadline, therefore do not meet pre-placement requirements, and cannot be allocated to a placement;
- You cease or withdraw from a placement without providing appropriate documentation or evidence. Non-attendance at placement without supporting evidence or explanation is considered withdrawal from the placement. (E.g. student fails to inform Field Education and Networking Coordinator and WIL Team of any injury or illness which renders the student unable to attend placement for a considerable timeframe, and then results in the student being unable to complete required hours within allocated timeframe. To avoid this, you must inform the Field Education and Networking Coordinator and WIL Team, provide a medical certificate, and request an extension for the timeframe that the student is medically unfit to attend placement);
- You do not show any progress or learning following formative or mid-point feedback, or performance remains unsatisfactory at the end of placement, as indicated by supervisor's evaluation;
- You do not abide by relevant UniSQ or accrediting body Codes of Conduct, relevant laws of the land and workplace procedures, and/or behaves in an unprofessional manner, or acts outside scope of practice, or participates in behaviours that may actually or potentially cause injury to self or others, or participates in any conduct or behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment, discriminatory, offensive, or unreasonably embarrassing to others;
- You fail to finalise all placement-related assessments and paperwork within the prescribed timeframe.

There are four possible outcomes for students at risk of failing a placement:

- The placement may be extended for a period that will give the student the opportunity to demonstrate the learning that needs to occur
- The student may be withdrawn and placed in another agency that can provide the required learning and support
- The student may be required to take a break from the placement to provide the time for student/supervisor to address the issues that are impeding the learning
- A decision is made to terminate the placement and fail the student

Reasonable Adjustments to Allocated Placements

Extensions to placement dates, or other requests for flexible arrangements, must be discussed with, and approved by, the Field Education and Networking Coordinator. If your circumstances change while on placement, you must also notify the Field Education and Networking Coordinator as soon as possible, so a suitable plan of action can be discussed.

Placement allocation changes will only be considered if the Field Education and Networking Coordinator deem it necessary to re-allocate the student for a valid reason.

Appeal Processes

UniSQ has an established Appeals process which can offer students' the ability to appeal a failure grade for placement. Students will need to provide evidence to support their claim so the learning plan and Placement Assessment and Review Tool (PART) can be useful resources. Students can appeal if their application is unsuccessful and can refer to the following appeals information:

- Feedback, Complaints and Grievance Resolution (UniSQ website)
- Student Grievance Resolution Policy
- Student Grievance Resolution Procedure
- Student Appeals Procedure

Teaching and Learning on Placement

Integrative Workshops and Peer Practice Groups

There are three mandatory workshops and three peer practice groups offered in both first and final placements and participation is compulsory for all students, as outlined in the ASWEAS (2021). These workshops and groups are considered part of the placement and 12 hours are allocated for students to attend. Students complete their timesheets in the ordinary way, indicating hours spent at the workshops and peer practice group meetings.

Workshops and peer practice groups are structured so students can share their experiences with their peers as well as to undertake specific learning activities, such as critical reflections and presentations related to their placement. These assessment tasks are outlined in the course outlines and are also incorporated into the student's placement documentation – Placement Assessment and Review Tool (PART). The course specifications in the MSWQ Handbook provide details.

Constructing a Learning Plan for Placement

The field education courses are progressive throughout the placement; adopting a model of continuous assessment using a learning plan that maps and assesses the agreed student progress at various points. The focus is on the personal learning needs of the student; the learning tasks required by the AASW and the University; and the learning requirements of the agency where the student is placed. SWM5500 Field Placement 1 and SWM6550 Field Placement 2 course specifications provide more details of the requirements for each placement (available online). Both placement courses are graded as either a pass or fail. The template for the learning plan, the Placement Assessment Review Tool (the PART) will be available via the StudyDesk site for the course and provided to all students prior to placement.

Differences Between Field Placement 1 and Field Placement 2

The learning objectives for first and final placement differ as the expectations for students' demonstration of the attainment of their learning are different. The course specifications describe what is expected at each year level but generally:

- A first-year student will demonstrate beginning knowledge and skills and,
- A final year student will demonstrate a level of competence commensurate with the standards of a graduate practitioner across a range of settings.

Information For Use of Student Portfolio

Students will be required to maintain a portfolio that documents evidence of their work, including journaling, diaries, reflections, case studies, presentations, project work, literature reviews, assessment pieces and importantly, the emerging practice framework. There are numerous activities and assessments throughout the social work degrees that involves students locating their materials in their portfolio. The pre-workshop placement will re- examine portfolios.

Students can share and show their portfolio contents with their Field Educator and Field Liaison. The portfolio will be very helpful when completing the mid and final placement learning plan reviews. The portfolio is not given an individual mark but will be considered in the final assessment process and can be very helpful if there are any questions about students' satisfactory attainment of learning. For students close to graduation, the e-portfolio houses documentation of their journey through their social work degree and importantly the final version of their practice framework; this is therefore of considerable utility for securement of employment interviews.

Professional Support

Your health and wellbeing is important to us at UniSQ. If you require personal support, you can engage in UniSQ's free, confidential and professional counselling and health services. An appointment can be made by phoning +61 7 4631 2372, or booked online, or by sending an email to supportforlearning@unisq.edu.aumailto:.

Please note, this is not a crisis service and is only open from 9.00 am- 5.00 pm AEST Monday to Friday. If you require more urgent or immediate support, the free services listed below can provide support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Lifeline - 13 11 34
- Suicide Call Back Service - 1300 659 467
- Mental Health Access Line- 1300 642 255
- Nurse & Midwife Support – 1800 677 887
- Critical incident on UniSQ placement - 1300 998 236
- **Emergency medical treatment – 000**

If you require support at any of stage of your study, you can access Student support services for health, counselling and wellbeing via UConnect for *confidential* support including emergency contact details.

There are several policies to ensure that students get proper support and perform their placements upholding university's reputation. These are as follows:

Equity in Education Policy and Procedure
Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Resolution for Students Policy and Procedure
Student Code of Conduct Policy
Student General Misconduct Procedure
Assessment of Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances Procedure
Students with a Disability Policy and Procedure

Insurance, Emergencies and Risk Management

In the event that an adverse incident or injury occurs while you are on placement, please comply with the Agency's Work Health & Safety (WH&S) policies. You must also review the information found on SafeTrak and complete the relevant incident or hazard report. (See 'Reporting an Incident'.)

Insurance Information While on Placement

For insurance purposes, "placement" is defined as practical work experience activities, research or training that is a compulsory requirement of your course or program. If you are undertaking a placement through UniSQ, you will be covered by the following types of insurance (as applicable) provided you are adequately supervised (while on placement) and all mandatory documentation has been submitted and verified (subject to policy exclusions and limitations):

- Public liability
- Professional Indemnity
- Medical malpractice
- Personal Injury

The University's personal injury policy covers you in the event you are injured on placement. For further information (or to lodge a claim), please contact the Risk Management, Compliance and Insurance team at insurance@unisq.edu.au

Please note that your personal belongings and motor vehicle will not be covered by the university's insurance policies. Students are advised to ensure their vehicle is registered and comprehensively insured to cover damages to their own vehicle or personal injury or property damage to a third party in the event of an accident.

Injury While on Placement

If you are injured or become unwell on placement it may be determined that an Emergency Department consultation is necessary. Should you find yourself injured, please follow the below steps:

1. Contact the WIL Team immediately via (07) 4631 2359
2. You may be offered the choice to be transferred to either a public or private ED via QAS
3. You are encouraged to attend the public hospital ED where there are no costs involved for consults, investigations and treatments
4. If you choose to stay in the private hospital ED, and the injury is a WorkCover claim, the University will **not** be responsible for any costs incurred for consults and treatment
5. If you choose to stay in the private hospital ED due to an acute illness, the University will **NOT** pay for the initial consult, and will **NOT** be responsible for any costs incurred for investigations, further consults and treatment
6. In this instance of leaving the hospital, the University will **not** be responsible for any costs incurred for consults and treatment

In the event that an adverse incident or injury occurs while you are on placement, please also comply with the Agency's Work Health & Safety (WH&S) policies.

Travel and Use of Vehicles

Students are responsible for arranging their own travel to and from placement (including any applicable insurances for the use of private or third-party motor vehicles). If students are travelling to and from placements in their personal vehicle, students need to be aware that using personal vehicles will be at their own risk and any damage would be at their own expense. If students use their personal vehicles, they should ensure they have sufficient insurance in place as Compulsory Third Party (CTP insurance) included in their vehicle registration will only cover damage to third party property. They should also be reminded they must comply with university policies and procedures, including the Travel Procedure, the Motor Vehicles and Travel Fatigue Procedure, Risk Management Policy and Procedure and the Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation Procedure.

If you are driving to a placement, it is important that you practice safe driving. If you are on prescribed medications consult your General Practitioner as to whether it is safe for you to drive. Remember to park your vehicle in areas that the agency has deemed suitable for staff to park. If you are leaving an agency after hours remember to abide by the security conditions of the agency to **minimise any risk to yourself**.

Travelling distances to rural or remote placement can be tiring. It is recommended that you take **regular breaks and stops in this journey**. Please ensure your vehicle is safe for travelling long distances and you keep the fuel tank reasonably well filled. It is recommended that you have a roadside assistance policy in the event of a breakdown. Be aware of distances between towns. Please ensure your mobile phone is always charged. Always keep someone informed of your whereabouts if you are in or travelling to a remote location.

In accordance with the university's insurance policy, students should not drive vehicles belonging to the placement organisation; students should only travel in vehicles belonging to the organisation as passengers and must be accompanied by an agency employee/supervisor during any trips made in motor vehicles.

Should the need arise and where students have been authorised by the placement agency and UniSQ to drive the placement providers motor vehicle, the student should be familiar with and adhere to the placement agency's motor vehicle policy prior to operating any motor vehicle. Students using a third-party vehicle should be covered for any damage they cause to this vehicle under the third party's insurance policy; however, it would be prudent to check the details of the policy. The University's Motor Vehicle policy only provides cover for university vehicles e.g. pool and salary packaged vehicles. It does not extend to third-party vehicles or personal vehicles, even if used in the course of a university approved activity.

Risk Management

As you take part in the placement program, it is essential that you are aware of the hazards that could occur during placement. You have an obligation to protect yourself and minimise any potential incident from an identified hazard. Below are some common hazards that you might encounter and some strategies to minimise the associated risk. If at any time on a placement you feel unsafe or uncomfortable with a possible or actual risk, you must notify the Field Education and Networking Coordinator.

Paid Employment During Placements

The university understands the need for students to work to support themselves financially. You must consider **fatigue policies** when completing a placement and also having paid work.

To make sure you comply with the fatigue policies in many facilities you must balance your paid work and clinical placement hours. You **CANNOT** work full time and attend placement as this **conflicts with health facilities' fatigue policies and places the public at risk.**

It is also vital for your safety that you do not complete an out of university paid shift and then a placement shift **directly after**. This is outside Queensland Health and Private Health Facilities' workplace health and safety rules. For example, students should not finish a night shift as an AIN in their job and then attend a morning shift as a student in a hospital ward. If you do not understand this, please contact the WIL Team for clarification.

Your clinical placement takes priority over other work commitments. Please give your employer plenty of notice so work does not impact on your ability to attend your clinical shifts.

Extenuating Circumstances or Disaster Management Processes

Students are allocated placements across a variety of settings within health care. If a serious situation arises that results in an agency activating their disaster management plan, it is vital that **students follow the lead of the [clinical] team** within the agency. These events might include utilities failure, flood, fire, ward closure, codes for violent behaviours or any other significant event.

If at any time while on clinical placement you feel unsafe or are not comfortable with a potential or actual risk, you must **notify the Field Education and Networking Coordinator**. If this event occurs after hours, then use the after-hours number.

Psychological Risk

If you believe that you are being **bullied or harassed** while on placement you should try to raise the issue with the person if possible, or speak to your Placement Supervisor and/or Field Education and Networking Coordinator. If you feel uncomfortable with addressing the situation with the person involved **you MUST contact the Field Education and Networking Coordinator** to discuss the matter further so help or intervention can be provided. Student services can provide you with support and guidance while a management plan is decided. Please refer to complaints and grievances definitions and policies.

Reporting an Incident

If you have an injury or an incident while you are on placement, **you must report it to your Placement Supervisor and the health care agency contact immediately**. You will be required to complete an incident report for the agency. This must be done as soon as possible after the incident. Once this is completed, please make sure you keep a copy of this report.

You will then need to notify the university by logging onto SafeTrak on UniSQ Safety Central and completing a UniSQ Incident Form.

When submitting a SafeTrak incident please ensure that the below information is included as part of the application:

- Assign incident to Manager/Supervisor – Professor Niki Edwards
- Business Unit/Faculty – School of Psychology and Wellbeing

This will be sent to your Field Education and Networking Coordinator if the incident is related to your placement activity.
Review the information on the SafeTrak page then click on the box that says 'Enter here'.
On the next page click onto the 'Incident/Hazard Reporting' box.
On the next page if reporting a hazard, click on the 'Student Hazard' box; if reporting an incident, click on the 'Student Incident' box.

Issues of Concern to You While on Placement

Most students have a positive experience on placement but occasionally events arise that can be concerning to you. As a student should you find yourself in this situation you are encouraged to voice your concerns in the first instance to your allocated supervisor or mentor, if you feel comfortable to do so. If the issue is not successfully resolved, please contact the Program Coordinator to discuss options and possible solutions. You can also report a concern via the UniSQ Reporting or sharing a concern webpage.

Student Professional Expectations

These guidelines are designed to provide you with guidance regarding what is expected from you, what your responsibilities include, and provide you with information about the appropriate conduct and behaviour whilst attending placements. These rules are in place to acknowledge the right of clients to feel secure in a professional environment where you have the privilege to learn from them.

Code of Conduct

While on placement you are representing the University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ) and as such are required to comply with the UniSQ Student Code of Conduct Policy, adhere to workplace procedures, and follow all reasonable directions by placement supervisors. Please behave appropriately with respect, humility and good manners with clients, the public and other members of the university and profession. All persons involved in dealing with students have been asked to report both exemplary and negative behaviours. If there is a breach of this policy, students may be asked to leave an agency and will be dealt with as per the Student Code of Conduct Policy. Please review the Student Code of Conduct Policy, Student General Misconduct Procedure and Academic Misconduct Policy.

Addressing Clients and Staff

All clients are to be always treated with the highest level of professionalism and respect. All medical staff should be addressed as Doctor unless or until they request otherwise.

Getting the Most out of Your Placement

You are responsible for making the most out of the learning opportunities while undertaking your placement. You should:

- Introduce yourself to the staff within the area you will be working
- Come prepared with learning objectives
- Be engaged in all activities
- Be punctual and dressed appropriately
- Take time to effectively communicate with the person overseeing your placement to ensure your placements goals, personal strengths and expectations can be achieved
- Seek feedback for each shift
- Achieve a satisfactory grade on the assessment items
- Attend the full amount of hours allocated for your placement course
- Bring your placement guide/workbook/portfolio documents to placement each day
- Submit all assessment items electronically through the course StudyDesk by the due date
- Demonstrate a professional attitude in all areas of your placement and be respectful, appreciative and open to opportunities to learn and take on board feedback from your supervisor

Student Responsibilities

This includes:

- Attend and take part in placements arranged by the university.
- Undertake all activities associated with the successful completion of your degree efficiently, effectively and to the best of your abilities.
- Actively participate in the learning process and take responsibility for learning including ensuring that adequate and timely feedback is received on performance from your Placement Supervisor.
- Adhere to all legislative conditions, work health and safety conditions, security conditions, confidentiality & privacy conditions and any other rules, bylaws, policies and procedures relating to the Placement that are a requirement of an agency, organisation, government or the university.
- Maintain current contact details with UniSQ (i.e. email and mobile phone number) and be able to be contacted at any time within a study period in which you are enrolled in a clinical placement course.

- Seek assistance if not confident with a procedure/treatment, or if you lack understanding in an area.
- Provide patient/client centred-care under professional supervision only.
- Practice in a manner that is safe and respectful and consistent with your level of competency and scope of practice.
- Take responsibility for your personal belongings.

Be Professional

- Maintain standards of professional practice.
- Abide by relevant Codes of Professional Conduct.
- Abide by relevant Codes of Professional Conduct (UniSQ and Placement Agency) including but not limited to rules, bylaws, policies and procedures of the Agency, including dress code.
- Be great ambassadors for the university and uphold standards of professional behaviour and presentation.
- Be punctual.
- Comply with reasonable and lawful directions of your Placement Supervisor.
- Act ethically and with consideration, honesty and courtesy to all staff, other students and visitors at the placement agency.
- Respect the rights, beliefs and values of others.
- Discuss issues as they arise with the placement supervisor, or Field Education and Networking Coordinator and act to resolve problems quickly and cooperatively.
- Demonstrate behaviour that allows others to work and study in an environment free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Complete Assessments

- Discuss learning/clinical objectives and expected learning outcomes with your placement supervisor.
- Arrange a plan for signing placement assessment documentation early in the placement.
- Contact the Supervisor or the Field Education and Networking Coordinator if there are any difficulties with meeting your course objectives.
- Contact the Supervisor or the Field Education and Networking Coordinator if the placement supervisor is not willing to initial, sign or make comments on placement assessments.
- Ensure that all assessment paperwork is completed and correctly submitted on time.

Students will not:

Act Outside UniSQ Guidelines

- Attend a placement if they have been advised by the university that the placement has been cancelled.
- Make public comment on behalf of the School or the University. This does not include circumstances in which the student is required to provide evidence in a court of law or is otherwise legally obliged or authorised by law.
- Remove or misuse any resources from either the university or placement agency.
- Remove or misappropriate any resources from either the University or Placement Agency. This includes the photographing of any aspect of the Placement Agency without the express consent of the Laboratory Supervisor.

Be Unprofessional

- Act outside the professional codes of conduct and scope of practice as defined by the accrediting body.
- Undertake client care without being supervised by a registered health care professional.
- Participate in any activities that misrepresent their status or level of skill or knowledge.
- Work outside their scope of practice.
- Take part in behaviours that may cause injury to others.
- Be involved in any conduct or behaviour that could be reasonably interpreted as harassment, discriminatory, offensive or embarrassing to others.
- Take part in any relationship in which there is any potential for taking advantage of the trust relationship inherent in the health or human service professional. Consent by the patient/client or the fact that they started the conduct or behaviour is not a defence.
- Accept gifts or any form of benefit from a patient/client that could be viewed as potentially influencing the impartiality of health care delivery or professional practice.

Prohibited Use of Substances

Alcohol consumption and other recreational or illicit drug use immediately before or during placement attendance is prohibited. It is your responsibility to ensure you have a zero blood alcohol level and have not consumed drugs which may adversely affect your performance on placement. Smoking is only permitted in designated smoking areas.

Confidentiality

As students you are now privy to exactly the same confidential information as other health care professionals and hence are subject to exactly the same constraints as stated so clearly in the ethic above. Students should exercise great caution before releasing any information obtained directly or indirectly about the people, projects or agency business connected with their placement, whether it relates to specific cases or to policy matters. In particular, any information related to users of the agency's services must be presumed confidential unless stated otherwise.

Students must maintain confidentiality at all times and never discuss clients using identifying information at home, in the classroom or online, including via Facebook, Twitter or other social media sites. Confidential information also includes intellectual property pertaining to the particular agency. If in doubt about the confidentiality of material students should seek advice from their Agency Supervisor.

All students must adhere to the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (QLD) (IP Act), as this is a major issue for health care workers. Please ensure you are aware of your responsibilities and obligations under this Act.

Failure to maintain confidentiality could result in legal action by the patient for breaches of confidentiality.

Mobile Phones

Students are not permitted to use a mobile phone or other electronic devices while attending placement, unless requested by the supervisor for placement activities. If the student must be contactable by mobile phone (emergency only) permission must be gained from the supervisor. Phones **must not** be used to acquire images/photographs/video/audio

Photographs or Recording

At no time can any photograph, image capture or recording be taken while attending a [clinical] placement.

Media Requests

Please refer all media requests to your Field Education and Networking Coordinator. Students **must not provide any comment** to the media about the clinical placement agency, a patient, a clinical case or disclose any other information that was obtained during the course of completing your clinical placement.

Social Media

Social media refers to any online or mobile tool where you share information of any kind and in any format. As a student you are not to post **any** information about your placement, clients, the agency or your fellow students or anything else related on any social media forum including private group pages. You may be dismissed from placement and possibly excluded from returning to the agency if anything posted contravenes any of the laws or codes that apply.

Students are strongly advised to exercise judgement and caution in the use of social media about their placement, as well as whilst on placement. This includes but is not limited to using mobile phones for personal calls whilst on placement, ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the agency in the use of social media sites such as Facebook, not taking photographs for personal use during placement and ensure professional use of the internet during placement.

Legal Documentation Requests

Police Requests

From time to time students will be requested or required by a police officer or the courts to perform a task or provide a statement for an incident. Whilst you are required to follow all legal requirements, it is requested that you contact your Field Education and Networking Coordinator in the first instance to seek advice and/or assistance when possible.

Subpoenas

All students are required to contact their Field Education and Networking Coordinator in the first instance in the event they are served with a subpoena.

Clinical Placement Agency Requests

All students are required to contact their Field Education and Networking Coordinator in the first instance before providing a verbal/written statement to the clinical placement agency in response to an incident.

Issues with Student Performance or Behaviour

While most placements proceed without incidents, it is important that all concerns are responded to in a timely manner and principles of natural justice and procedural fairness apply. Where possible placement difficulties will be addressed by using the steps below to ensure the placement continues and the student has the opportunity to demonstrate competence and pass their placement.

- Firstly, the student, agency staff member and/or or Field Educator need to discuss the issue with each other to try to resolve it.
- If this is unsuccessful, the student or the field educator needs to contact the Field Liaison to intervene and explore the issues and suggest some strategies to improve the learning. This usually involves modifying the learning plan or supervision arrangements, or improving the learning opportunities.
- If this is unsuccessful, the Program Director and/or the Field Education and Networking Coordinator will need to become involved to review the placement and make decisions regarding viability.

Documentation of relevant information, including emails, reports, the learning plan and written examples of work would be very helpful for supporting and negotiating an outcome.

It is important to note that:

- Some issues may also be dealt with through an agency's policies, grievance and complaint processes (e.g. harassment and discrimination, breach of confidentiality or privacy).
- Students are on placement at the invitation of the agency and on a voluntary basis. An agency may decide not to follow due process and terminate a placement immediately.

Related University Policies

Student Code of Conduct Policy
Academic Integrity Policy
Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Resolution for Students Policy and Procedure
Student Grievance Resolution Policy
Work Health and Safety
Assessment of Special Circumstances Procedure
Student General Conduct Policy

Roles and Responsibilities for Placement

In preparation for, and supporting each field education placement, there are several staff who have specific roles and responsibilities to ensure that quality student learning is achieved.

Field Educator

Field Educators determine the scope and parameters of learning opportunities within their setting and support students on a weekly basis to help them reflect on their experiences, make links to theoretical frameworks, and provide a strong mentoring focus. These learning tasks are guided by the AASW Practice Standards and the specific placement course learning objectives as a framework. The learning objectives of each placement course set out what they hope to learn, how this learning will occur and how their assessment will occur. Consistent with ASWEAS (2021) the major areas of responsibility for Field Educators are:

- providing regular supervision and meeting the AASW standard of 1.5 hours of formal supervision for each 35 hours of placement.
- arranging a suitable working space and resources needed for the student to undertake learning activities
- allocating and monitoring appropriate practice tasks
- assisting and supporting the student to learn from the learning tasks through weekly, formal supervision and the use of reflective activities
- being available to discuss student's progress with the Field Liaison and to attend any liaison meetings
- evaluating student practice

Task Supervising Field Educator

The role of the Task Supervisor within a placement is crucial to facilitating a positive learning experience for the student and provides the day-to-day tasks for the student but does not provide supervision of the student's placement. The task supervisor may or may not be a qualified social worker but is equipped with skills and abilities to guide students, providing oversight and task supervision to support learning and progress in the placement. They also work closely with the External Field Educator and the Field Liaison to monitor and review student's progress and skills development.

External Field Educator

The External Field Educator is to complete the same tasks as the onsite Field Educator, although some aspects can be allocated to the task supervisor. The External Field Educator will:

- arrange and provide at least 1.5 hours of formal supervision for each 35 hours of placement with the student. Some of this time may be provided in a group format.
- work collaboratively with the task supervisor and the agency to address the student's progress and learning on placement
- engage in discussions with the student on all aspects of their learning and assist them to critically reflect on their practice
- engage with the student during the writing of the learning plan, the mid-placement and end of placement reports
- meet with the student and the task supervisor in preparation for the mid- placement visit and at the end of placement
- provide constructive written feedback on the student's learning plan, mid and end of placement reports
- work with the Field Liaison.

Field Liaison

Should placement numbers go beyond staff availability; sessional Field Liaisons may be recruited. The Field Liaison is responsible for building a consultative supportive relationship with the student, the Field Educator and the agency where the student is sited. They are responsible for overseeing and maintaining contact with both students and supervisors. They work collaboratively with all parties. The University Liaison at minimum, has contact with students within the first weeks of placement commencing and at mid placement. Field Liaisons may also check in with students at placement completion. Key tasks of this role include:

- monitoring and evaluation: The Field Liaison has an important role in assessing, in conjunction with the students and supervisors, the quality of the student's placement experience and the extent to which the aims and objectives of the placement have been achieved
- education: The Field Liaison is a link between classroom teaching and agency practice. Liaison visits should broaden and enrich the educational experience to optimise student learning
- support and problem-solving: At times, the placement experience creates challenges or difficulties that require external problem solving and/or interventions, guidance and support. The Field Liaison should be accessible to both students and supervisors for support and advice. The Field Liaison can have direct contact with either students or supervisors to ensure that they undertake the required tasks for the successful completion of the placement

Field Education and Networking Coordinator

As required by the ASWEAS (2021), the Field Education and Networking Coordinator at UniSQ has been appointed at academic level B/C, is a qualified social worker with at least five years post-qualifying experience and eligible for membership of the AASW. This position reports to the Academic Discipline Lead (Social Work and Human Services) and is responsible for:

- ensuring students on placement are assigned a Field Educator (Social Work supervisor);
- providing academic leadership to and coordinating the Field Education Program;
- designing and delivering placement learning opportunities;
- program compliance with ASWEAS;
- oversee the Field Education Course Coordinators who support student placements including assessing students' progress and capacity to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and values within their emerging practice frameworks, along with managing relationships with placement partners.
- The Field Education and Networking Coordinator is also responsible for recruiting and training Field Liaisons and Field Educators.

Student

Of course, the most important person in the placement is the student, who can learn and apply the knowledge, skills and principles that underpin ethical and competent social work practice. The most important role of the student is to be open to learning and to critically examine and reflect on their own personal values and assumptions. Students are treated as 'employees' of the placement organisation and must adhere to their policies, protocols and systems, such as privacy, dress and confidentiality and generally behaving in a professional manner.

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Team

The Work Integrated Learning (WIL) team for Academic Affairs is made up of professional staff who are not social work qualified. The team works in collaboration with the Field Education and Networking Coordinator to support discipline specific needs of the social work program under the direction of the Team Leader. This will include assisting with tasks such as the management of student placement agreements as well as student placement offers and mandatory documents.

When a student undertakes a professional placement, the various parties assume particular responsibilities for the placement. The parties are the Student, Agency and University. The Agency Supervisor and the University WIL Team are the key contacts throughout the professional placement.

The outcomes of placement reflect the above collaborative arrangements. However, it remains the responsibility of the university, in all instances, to determine the final grade/outcome for the placement.

Orientation for Field Educators

All participants involved in field education experiences will be provided with timely orientation and support processes. The Field Education and Networking Coordinator will ensure Field Educators are comprehensively briefed and provided appropriate orientation to Liaisons prior to the student undertaking placement within the agency or organisation. Both University Liaisons and Field Educators will also be provided with a copy of this Professional Placement Guide. If Field Educators have any questions or enquiries prior to student placement commencing, they should make direct contact with the WIL team or the Field Education and Networking Coordinator. During placement, the Field Education and Networking Coordinator is the primary contact for information on the structure of placements, however the University Liaison provides assistance, specifically in relation to the student on placement. At the completion of placement, feedback is always welcomed regarding the placement experience.

Other support offered to Field Educators include:

- Invitations to relevant professional development opportunities at UniSQ, such as access to research presentations
- Opportunities for involvement in teaching and presentations to students

Borrowing Library Resources

Field Educators will have full borrower rights and access to all UniSQ library services for the duration of the placement. Students are encouraged to continue to read widely and broadly while on placement. They will continue to have access to UniSQ libraries where there is an extensive e-book collection, specific to social work. Students should feel free to contact the Liaison Librarians for borrowing requests or library support. Please also see the following library resources available to UniSQ social work students:

- UniSQ Library Study and Research Toolkit (StaRT), Self-paced tutorials: searching for and evaluating information, databases, referencing, assignment and exam preparation, general study skills, and mathematics.
- UniSQLibrary Referencing resources Learn how to use the APA or Harvard referencing style.
- Online Study Support Librarians and Learning Advisors provide advice on library and study skills.

Placement Assessment Requirements

Placement Assessment Review Tool

Assessment is built upon a learning plan which addresses the learning outcomes of the course. Placement learning goals are negotiated by students and their supervisor/s and recorded in the PART – Placement Assessment Review Tool which is a 'living document' to record and review the placement performance of students. The PART requires students to develop learning their goals at the beginning of placement (PART 1) and then formally review their progress towards these goals at two subsequent points, at mid (PART 2) and end of placement (PART 3).

The PART also requires students and their agency / external field educators to have three separate contacts with their UniSQ liaison throughout the life of placement. Please see the SWM5500 and SWM6550 course sites for detailed information on how to use the PART, and expectations of students and field educators within the placement assessment lifecycle.

University of Southern Queensland

2024 Student Placement Declaration

This document is a mandatory pre-placement document for all students enrolled in a placement course with the University of Southern Queensland. This document is a summary of your responsibilities to UniSQ and our agencies prior to, during and after your placement. Please tick each box to acknowledge that you understand and will fulfill these requirements. Complete the signature section and submit this declaration via InPlace.

Overarching requirements are:

- meeting the academic pre-requisites for the placement course
- ensuring you are enrolled in any placement courses for the relevant period of study
- checking student emails and other communication channels (Placement Hub) regularly

To prepare for my placement **prior to placement release,** I understand that I must:

- ☐ Submit my mandatory documents by the deadlines provided on the Important Dates and ensure they remain current during for my placement timeframe.
- ☐ Declare any perceived, potential or actual conflicts of interest.
- ☐ For insurance purposes, declare any pre-existing medical conditions that could affect my safety during placement.
- ☐ Be available to attend placement at any time in the period of study I am enrolled including study breaks and exam periods.
- ☐ Acknowledge that I may not be given a placement at my preferred location and that I may be required to travel more than 1 hour to attend placement.

To prepare for my placement **after placement release,** I will:

- ☐ Organise leave and personal commitments.
- ☐ Ensure I am familiar with the insurance and emergency contact information.
- ☐ Provide any extra requirements requested by my Placement Agency in a timely manner.

During and after my placement, I will:

- ☐ Present professionally with my student ID card.
- ☐ Abide by professional expectations, codes, standards and practices for my discipline.
- ☐ Comply with fatigue management policies and manage own work so it does not impact placement on my placement.
- ☐ Promptly notify my Supervisor, Field Education and Networking Coordinator and UniSQ WIL Team of any absences.
- ☐ Report any incidents while on placement as per the UniSQ guidelines.
- ☐ Keep copies of all my placement assessments and timesheets.

General

- ☐ I declare that I have read, understood and will comply with the information outlined in the Placement Guide and Placement Hub.
- ☐ I declare that I have read the UniSQ Student Code of Conduct Policy and agree to uphold all student expectations stated
- ☐ I understand that I need to contact the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Office and the Field Education and Networking Coordinator if I am unable to meet the obligations for placement at any stage of my course progression.
- ☐ I understand and accept that I may be unenrolled from a placement course if I do not meet the mandatory document requirements within the timeframes required.
- ☐ I understand and consent to the University providing relevant personal/health (including mandatory document) information about me to placement facilities as necessary for placement purposes only.
- ☐ I understand and accept my student responsibilities as outlined in the Placement Guide
- ☐ I understand that failure to meet the Inherent Requirements (allowing for reasonable adjustments where possible) may mean that I am not accepted for clinical placement and that this will prevent my progression and completion of my chosen program

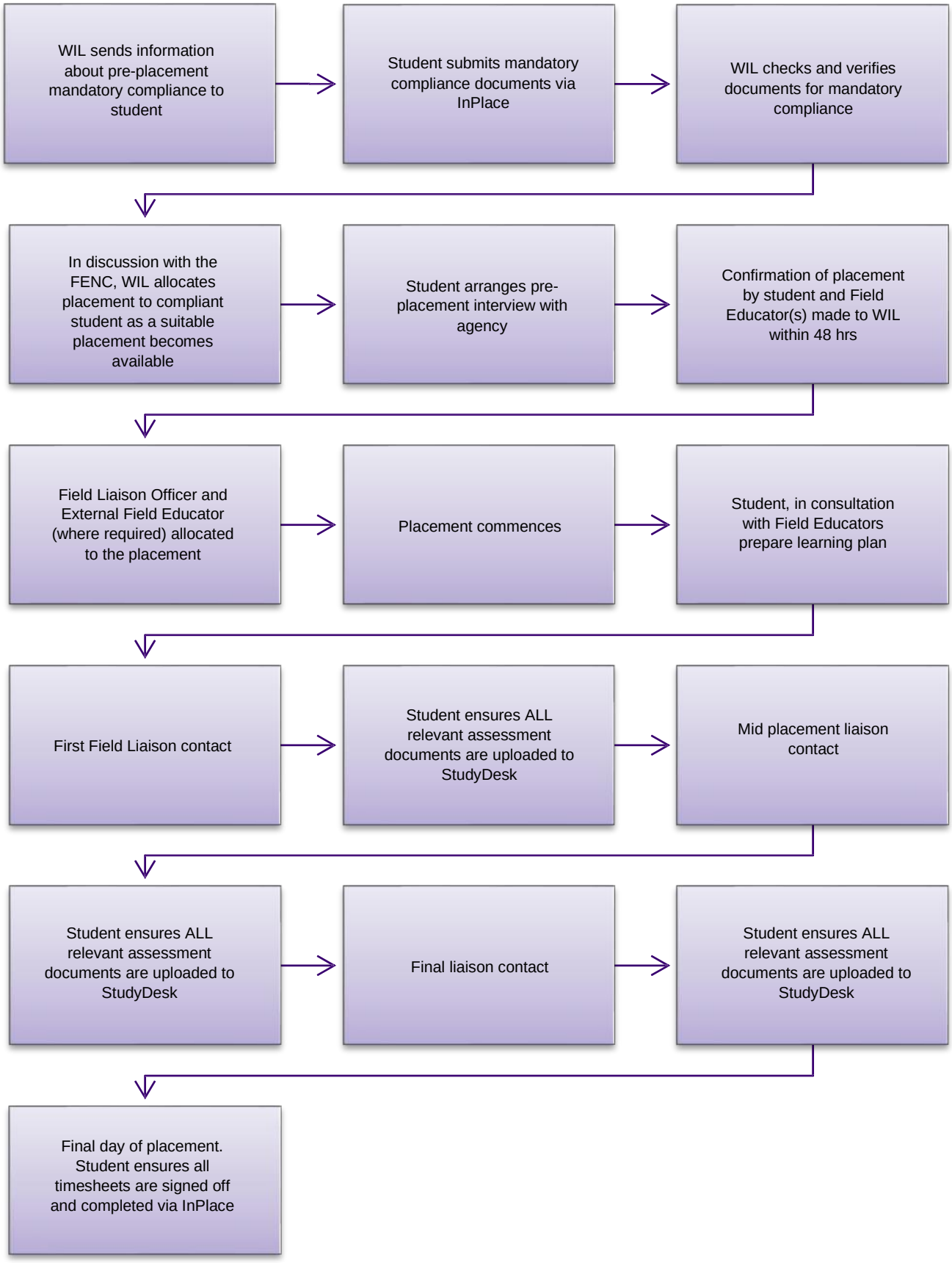
Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

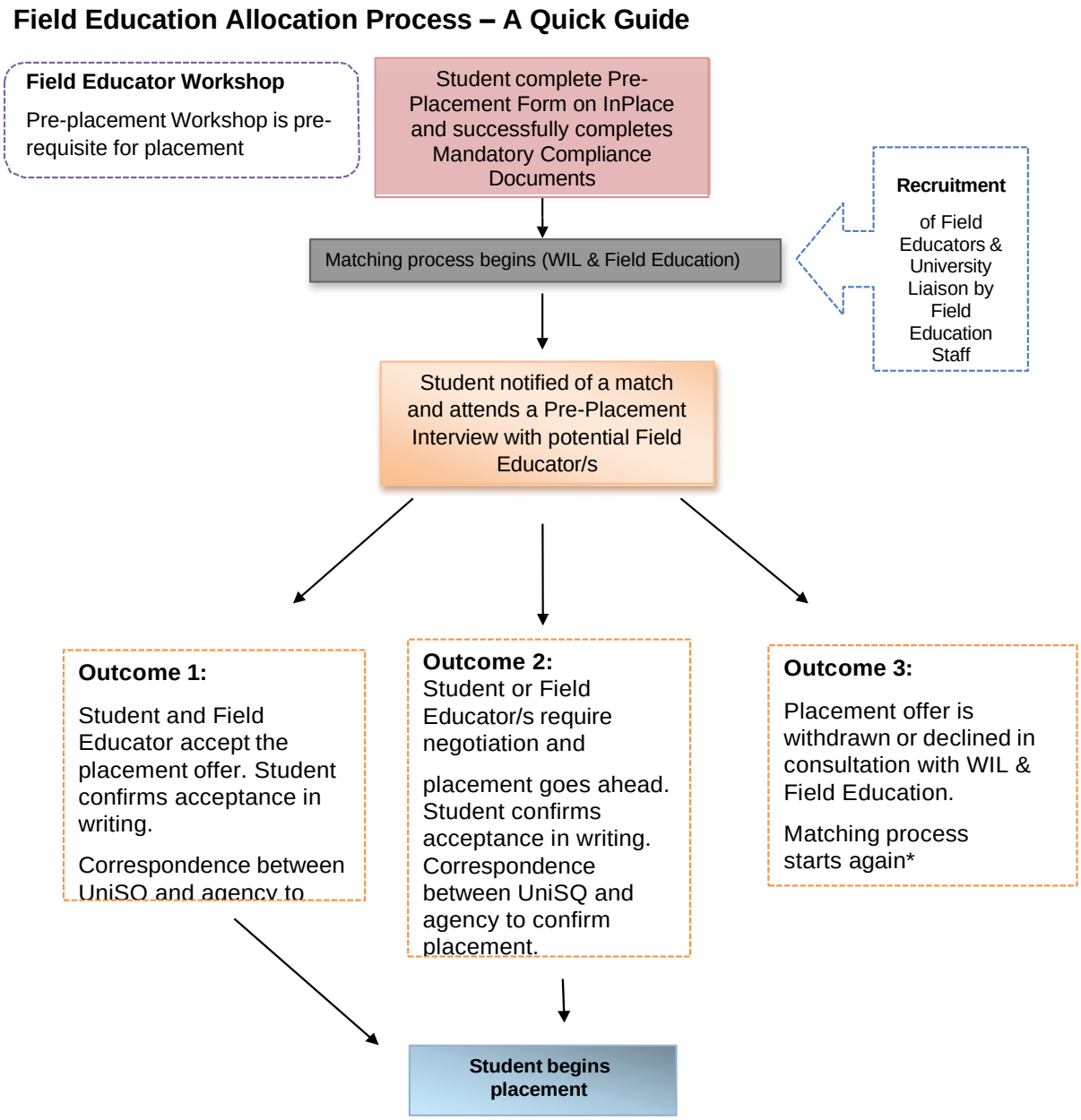
Appendices

Appendix A - Placements Flowchart



Appendix B - Placement Allocation Chart

Placement allocation is depicted in the figure below.



Appendix C - Recognition of Prior Learning Guidelines

Guidelines are provided below for students applying for RPL, who are required to submit a portfolio of the following documents. Students should take time to read what is required and provide details needed to comprehensively response to each expectation. It is advisable that students discuss their potential eligibility with the Field Education and Networking Coordinator prior to applying for RPL, so they are well informed about the requirements and expectations.

The application must include:

- An Introductory Statement which includes personal details, phone contact number, email address and a brief statement outlining why the applicant considers they meet the requirements for RPL.
- A Curriculum Vitae which clearly shows how the applicant meets the AASW work requirement of a minimum of 3 full-time equivalent years of formal practice in a relevant context in the previous seven years. At least the final year of the student's work experience will be within three years of applying for RP, using social work practice skills such as assessment, case management, and methods such as casework, policy work or community work.
- Evidence of current enrolment in the prerequisites Courses or evidence of successful completion of these prerequisites.
- Relevant Position Descriptions or other documentation outlining previous and current positions.
- A portfolio which addresses key learning objectives for first placement, with reference to the AASW Practice Standards which inform each learning objective. Documentary evidence is required to support the applicant's claims against the learning objectives to ensure that and that students will be able to fully achieve the learning outcomes of the program.
- Names and contact details of 2 referees who have worked with the student in a professional capacity. At least one of these must be a professional social work practitioner who is eligible for AASW membership, has a minimum of 2 years post- qualifying experience, and can attest to the accuracy of the information provided in the application from a social work practice perspective. Referees will be invited to provide comment on the applicant's progress against each practice standard
- Students are required to provide documentary evidence that they have had a minimum of 21 hours of professional supervision with a qualified social work supervisor in the 24 months preceding their application. Examples may include a supervision contract, supervision agenda, record of meetings or evidence from the supervisors.
- The assessment of the RPL application involves:
    - Consideration of the portfolio of evidence to determine the extent to which the learning objectives of SWM5500 Social Work Field Education 1 have been met
    - Confirmation that the applicant is making satisfactory academic progress
    - Interviews with and/or consideration of written evidence from nominated referees to discuss their assessment of the students experience and confirm achievement of the learning objectives from a social work perspective

If a student is awarded RPL for the first placement, there are conditions related to the final placement:

- Undertake a placement in an organisation or agency that provides on-site supervision by a qualified social worker
- Will not be eligible for an overseas placement or a work-based placement
- Students granted RPL for their first placement will be required to provide a copy of the RPL application to their subsequent social work supervisor
- Subsequent placements will be made in a field of practice distinct from areas in which the student has gained experience and on which the RPL application was based and approved

All applications will be assessed by the Field Education and Networking Coordinator. On request, students may be required to meet with the Field Education and Networking Coordinator and Program Director to present a summary of their experience and achievements, demonstrating they have functioned at the level of a student completing a first placement.

All policies, procedures and student information related to RPL have been listed below:

- Credit and Exemption Procedure
- Student Information for recognition of prior learning
- Credit Calculator
- Application for Credit/Exemption Form (QTAC Applicant)
- Work Experience to Course equivalency Form

Students have the opportunity to appeal if their application is unsuccessful and can refer to:

- Feedback, complaints and grievance resolution
- Student Grievance Resolution Policy
- Student Grievance Resolution Procedure
- Student Appeals Procedure

University of Southern Queensland

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