Social Work Field Education

Information Sheet for Employers: Place of Employment Placements

1. Introduction

Flinders University is an accredited provider of Social Work education by the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) and offers programs of study at the undergraduate level in the Bachelor of Social Work and the graduate level in the Master of Social Work.

Both the Bachelor and Master of Social Work programs include a field education component consisting of two placements of 500 hours each. Students can apply to undertake a field education placement at their placement of employment, provided adequate provisions are made to comply with the requirements of the Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards (ASWEAS) 2012, Guideline 1.2: Guidance on Field Education Programs – 3.1; Placements in student’s place of employment.

This information sheet provides an overview of the key requirements that must be met for a Place of Employment (POE) placement. Employers should carefully consider these requirements, the commitment required and the impact to the current work arrangement when contemplating an employee’s request for a POE placement. Before submitting an application your employee will be asked to complete a checklist showing that the requirements can be met.

2. Employer Responsibilities

In order to meet both the University Field Education and ASWEAS requirements for a POE placement, employers will be required to:

- Be aware of the structural requirements of placements. Detailed information can be found in the Field Placement Handbook; however, key aspects include:
  - Placements are typically undertaken 4 days per week and start at the commencement of semester
  - Placement students must attend integration seminars in-person on the day they are not attending placement. Online seminar options exist for domestic students
• Provide learning experiences that are different from the employee’s regular job role.

• If the employee is a final placement student, provide a placement experience in a different field of practice, with different client groups, using different methods of social work practice than the employee’s first placement.

• Support the employee as a student by:
  
  o Providing appropriate accommodation, orientation and safe work practice training as required for the POE placement role
  
  o Protecting student time and providing opportunities to engage in learning, including allowing for 30 minutes per day for reflection and completing placement-related assignments
  
  o Nominating an Agency Field Educator (student supervisor). It is preferable, though not essential, that the employee’s current line supervisor is not the Agency Field Educator. They will be responsible for:
    
    ▪ Providing learning opportunities, allocating and supervising tasks and supporting the development of a student Learning Plan
    
    ▪ Providing regular supervision and timely, constructive feedback. An External Field Educator will be appointed by the University if the Agency Field Educator is not a qualified social worker
    
    ▪ Contributing to student assessment through the placement and attend a mid-placement assessment meeting
    
    ▪ Addressing issues as they arise and communicate with the Field Education Coordinator/Liaison Officer and External Field Educator in a timely manner

• Entering into a written Letter of Agreement and exchange Certificates of Currency with the University evidencing proof of protections or insurance by all parties. Further details of the Letter of Agreement will be provided upon receipt of an application for a POE placement or earlier upon request.

3. Further Information

Should you have any questions or require further information about the University or ASWEAS requirements when considering an employee’s request for a POE placement, please contact the following Field Education Coordinator:

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