

Social Work Field Education

Information Sheet for Employers: Work-based 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 place of employment, provided adequate provisions are made to comply with the requirements of the [Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards](#) (ASWEAS) 2021, Section 4 Field Education Standards.

This information sheet provides an overview of the key requirements that must be met for a work-based 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 work-based placement. Before submitting an application your employee will be asked to complete an application showing that the requirements can be met and they will need this signed off by their employer: line manager and senior manager.

2. Employer Responsibilities

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

- Be aware of the structural requirements of placements. Detailed information can be found in the Pre-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
- Locate the student in a work setting/role away from their normal employment setting. Students cannot undertake work-based placements in their normal

employed role. As an agency you would need to have capacity to shift the student to a new setting for placement. This serves the dual purpose of providing new learning opportunities and protecting a student's status for the duration of placement. Students cannot be expected to meet normal work commitments as an employee when undertaking their placement hours.

- 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. If the student had Recognition of Prior Learning in place of their first placement, it is essential the placement opportunity provides direct practice learning involving application of professional interpersonal skills and is supervised by an onsite qualified social work supervisor.
- Support the employee as a student by:
 - Providing appropriate orientation and safe work practice training as required for the work-based placement role
 - Protecting student time and providing opportunities to engage in learning, including allowing for 30 minutes per day for reflection and completing placement-related assignments
 - Nominating an Agency Field Educator (student supervisor). It is 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 Liaison 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 work-based placement or upon request.

3. Further Information

Should you have any questions or require further information about the University or [ASWEAS 2021](#) requirements when considering an employee's request for a work-based placement, please contact the Work Integrated Learning Team: swplacements@flinders.edu.au