



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

—
Faculty of Medicine,
Dentistry and Health
Sciences

Student Placement Handbook

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Introduction

Who is this document for?

This document contains important information and obligations for any student that will undertake a student placement as part of their studies in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences.

A “student placement” might sometimes be referred to as a “fieldwork placement”, “practical placement”, “work integrated learning”, “clinical placement”, “clinical practicum” or “clinical practice”. It is the component in some courses or subjects that is conducted in a non-classroom environment that assists you in putting your theoretical knowledge into practice, usually involving interaction with actual patients or clients. It also includes fieldwork placements at non-health service sites, for example a social work placement in a community-based setting.

By undertaking a student placement, you agree to comply with your obligations as detailed in this document.

Things to know about student placements

There are a few important things to know about student placements:

1. **Patient/client wellbeing is the first priority.**

Your access to patients or clients and their information is, and remains at all times, subject to the placement provider’s overriding duty of care to the patient or client and is conditional on that person providing consent, where reasonably practical.

2. **Many of our placements are with external organisations.**

This has lots of benefits for you, but it does mean that placements and associated policies are at the sole discretion of the student placement provider. This often means that each provider may have different policies and processes that you need to make sure you are aware of.

3. **Undertaking placement does not make you an employee.**

Your student placement does not create any employment or other similar relationship between you and the placement provider. You must at no time represent that you are employed or act on behalf of the placement provider.

Your personal information

In order to efficiently deliver your student placements, some of your personal information will be shared with your placement provider, including:

- Your full name
- Date of birth
- Student ID
- University email address
- Mobile phone number
- Police check information
- Working with Children Check information
- Infection and immunisation details
- AHPRA registration status (if applicable)
- Any other information you disclose that may affect your student placement.

This information is shared for the purpose of placement providers assessing your suitability for placement and performing mandatory induction activities (eg issuing identification cards, registering your details with local security staff, etc).

By electing to undertake a student placement, you agree to the University disclosing this information as is necessary for the coordination and ongoing management of your student placement.

From time to time, placement providers might request additional personal information. The University will not disclose this information without first obtaining your permission.

Intellectual property

From time to time, students may generate original intellectual property whilst on student placement.

Generally speaking, you will own any intellectual property that is discovered, brought into existence or otherwise acquired by you as a result of, for the purposes of, or in connection with coursework that is a component of your course.

The student placement provider will usually own any further intellectual property that is discovered, brought into existence or otherwise acquired as a result of, for the purposes of, or in connection with the student placement.

Before placement

All students undertaking clinical placements are required to read and be familiar with the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights:

www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/participation-and-communication/australian-charter-healthcare-rights

You must notify the University if, at any time or for any reason, you believe that you may not be fit, proper or competent to undertake the student placement.

This includes letting us know if you have any impairment that might affect activities relating to the student placement in any way.

You will not be permitted to commence your student placement if you:

- Have not passed all pre-requisite academic and clinical assessments relevant to the student placement; or
- Do not meet the minimum language and communication competence levels required to undertake the student placement.

Documentation requirements

The University coordinates the collection of required student documentation on behalf of the placement providers. The requirements are policies of the placement providers, which the University enforces. You will be notified via your University email account when documentation is due and what, if any, is outstanding.

All students are expected to procure, maintain and submit to the University:

- A valid National Police History Check
- A current Victorian Working with Children Check
- Evidence of a satisfactory infectious diseases and immunisation record

Students in some courses or attending some placement providers may be required to provide additional documentation or satisfy additional requirements.

Police checks

You must ensure that you:

- Obtain an Australian National Police History Check (“police check”) annually for the duration of your studies, according to the Police Record Check Procedure.
- If you have lived overseas for more than 12 months in the past 10 years or have been a citizen or permanent resident of a country other than Australia at any time after the age of 16, complete and submit the Overseas Police Record Declaration prior to your first placement (in addition to the annual Australian police check).
- Notify the University and your current placement provider (if applicable) immediately if, at any time, you are under investigation, have been charged with or found guilty of a criminal offence (other than a minor traffic offence) whether in Australia or overseas.

In the event that the University becomes aware of any criminal history or other relevant information by way of the police checking process, it will notify both you and your assigned placement provider, who may wish to meet directly with you to discuss any impacts on your student placement.

The student placement provider may refuse to commence or continue your student placement if, as a result of information disclosed during the police checking process, they reasonably believe that you pose an unacceptable risk to them or their patients.

Working with children checks

All students must hold and provide on request a current Victorian Working with Children Check that is valid for the entire duration of your placement.

You must ensure that:

- If you do not currently hold a valid Victorian Working with Children check, you obtain and submit one according to the Working with Children Check Procedure
- If you currently hold a valid employee or volunteer Victorian Working with Children Check, you submit your card to the University and update your MyCheck account to reflect the University as an organisation that engages you in child-related work according to the Working with Children Check Procedure.

You are also required to:

- Ensure that the University is listed in your MyCheck account as an organisation that engages you in child-related work (per the details in the Working with Children Check Procedure) at all times while undertaking placement
- Present your Working with Children Check card on request to each placement provider before commencing placement
- Comply at all times with the legal obligations and responsibilities of all Working with Children Check cardholders under the Working with Children Act 2005 and the Working with Children Regulations 2006.

- If undertaking a placement with an interstate provider, check and follow the requirements of the relevant authority in that state as regulations regarding child protection vary from state to state.

As with police checks, if the University becomes aware of any criminal history or other relevant information by way of the Working with Children Check process it will notify both you and your placement provider, who may wish to meet directly with you to discuss any impacts on your student placement.

Similarly, the student placement provider may refuse to commence or continue your student placement if, as a result of information disclosed during the Working with Children Check process, they reasonably believe that you pose an unacceptable risk to them or their patients.

What happens if my card doesn't arrive in time?

In some cases, you might have applied for your Working with Children Check but not have received an outcome in time to meet the deadline for submission to the University. In this case, you should provide us with a copy of your Working with Children Check Application Confirmation email, which is valid for up to three months. You must provide us with a copy of your outcome as soon as possible after you receive it.

I have current registration as a teacher. Do I still need a Working with Children Check?

No, students with current Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration are not required to obtain a separate Working with Children Check. You may simply submit a scan of your VIT card via our website instead of a Working with Children Check card.

Infectious diseases and immunisation record

Participating in a student placement, particularly in a healthcare environment, bears a risk that infection might occur between you and a patient or client. These risks cannot be totally eliminated, but they can be minimised.

The University of Melbourne takes the prevention of infectious disease transmission very seriously and requires that students provide evidence of their infection and immunisation status on an annual basis in accordance with the Infectious Diseases and Immunisation Procedure, which is available on the Student Placements website.

The tests and vaccinations required under the Infectious Diseases and Immunisation Procedure are aligned with the requirements of most health care providers. Some placement providers may have additional requirements that must be satisfied prior to commencing the student placement.

Students are expected to cover all costs associated with satisfying these requirements; including medical consultations, serological testing and administration of vaccines as necessary.

What if I'm not immunised according to the requirements?

If you are not appropriately immunised (whether as a result of refusal, a failure to seroconvert, sensitivity, medical contra-indication or for any other reason), you may be required to discuss this with the placement provider directly and will be subject to their policies, which might affect your placement experience.

In some cases, the placement provider may not permit you to commence or continue your placement. In this instance, the University will endeavour to source a suitable alternative placement, but the availability of such a placement cannot be guaranteed. In the event that you are unable to obtain the required placement experience, you will not be able to complete your course.

Other documentation

Some placement providers require that students sign a 'Student Undertaking' prior to commencing their placement. The placement coordinator in your department will notify you if this is required and will arrange for you to sign the appropriate document.

Students in some courses or who are due to undertake placement with particular providers may need to provide other documentation before commencing placement. This may include evidence of training in some or all of the following:

- First aid (level 2)
- Manual handling
- Hand hygiene

A failure to comply with these additional requirements may impact on your suitability to undertake placement and may, in some cases, prevent you from completing your course.

AHPRA registration

Students in most health disciplines are required to be registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) prior to commencing a student placement. Your course coordinator can advise whether this applies to your program of study.

For students in most courses, the University will ensure that your details are submitted to AHPRA for registration within 30 days of course admission, and you will be notified via email once your registration is complete. We will also notify your placement provider(s).

When you complete or cease your study with the University, your student registration with AHPRA will automatically be revoked. You will not receive any notification of this.

Psychology students are responsible for applying directly to AHPRA for Provisional Registration and maintaining this registration for the duration of their studies.

Rural placements

Students undertaking placements in rural areas are strongly encouraged to complete the Introduction to Rural Health module prior to attending a rural placement. It is a self-directed package that takes approximately 45 minutes to complete and there is a certificate of completion that you can present to your placement provider:

goingruralhealth.com.au/events/introduction-to-rural-health

You may need to register with the Going Rural Health website before accessing this package.

Overseas placements

If you're due to undertake placement outside of Australia, you must register your travel with the University before you depart.

Registering your travel means that:

- You are covered by free travel insurance
- The University is aware of your travel plans and can contact you in the event of an emergency.

To register your travel plans and obtain free travel insurance, visit our Insurance website: **students.unimelb.edu.au/admin/insurance**

Students might also be eligible for a grant to assist with the cost of undertaking study overseas. To apply, visit the Melbourne Global Mobility website: **mobility.unimelb.edu.au/outbound/programs/work-internship**



During placement

Both the University and our student placement providers expect high standards from students in relation to honesty, integrity and general behaviour at all times. It is expected that students act in a manner consistent with the mission and care philosophy of the student placement provider and according to reasonable and appropriate standards for a professional environment.

You must at all times:

- Comply with all elements of this Handbook and any reasonable instructions given by the University or by the student placement provider, its employees, agents, representatives or any visiting clinicians accredited to the placement provider;
- Only participate in the delivery of health care, treatment or other work at levels commensurate with your stage of preparation and progress in your course while under supervision and as approved by the placement provider;
- Perform any task allocated to you as part of the student placement with due care, skill and attention and in a proper and time efficient manner; and
- Comply with all applicable laws, protocols, procedures, policies and guidelines including, without limitation, all matters pertaining to occupational health and safety, infection control, privacy and confidentiality, personal information and health records and any reasonable requirements as directed by the student placement provider from time to time.

You must not at any time:

- Act in a manner which could disrupt or adversely affect the student placement provider's reputation, interests or goodwill; or
- Improperly remove any property belonging to the student placement provider (including, but not limited to, equipment and medical records).

The placement provider's rights and responsibilities

The student placement provider will ensure that all relevant by-laws, policies, manuals, guidelines, protocols, procedures and any other relevant information is made readily available to you, including details of any emergency procedures to be followed. You must comply with these at all times.

The placement provider may, at any time:

- Make relevant enquiries and take other necessary steps to satisfy itself that you are competent to undertake the student placement and that you conduct yourself in a safe and professional manner; and
- Instruct you in connection with any task or responsibility arising in the course of the student placement.

The student placement provider will use best endeavours to obtain patient/client consent to you participating in their care or treatment, where reasonably practical.

Complaints and unsatisfactory performance

If a complaint is received by the placement provider in relation to any student or student placement, they are required to notify the University.

If the placement provider reasonably feels that you are not competent to perform allotted tasks, fail to conduct yourself in a safe and professional manner, or fail to comply with any law, protocol, policy, procedure, guideline or reasonable instruction of the placement provider, they may:

- Terminate the practical exercise in which you are participating; or
- Restrict or limit your access to patients, clients, stakeholders or third parties with which they have dealings; or
- Direct you to leave the premises and/or refuse further access to the premises; and
- Take all reasonable steps necessary to ensure that you comply with any instruction given under this clause.

In the event that the placement provider takes any of the above action, they will also notify the University, who may also take disciplinary action against you according to the University's statutes, policies and procedures.

If you witness or experience bullying or harassment while on placement, or have a different concern that you wish to raise, you should make contact with your course coordinator immediately.

Travel and equipment

The student placement provider will typically provide you (at no cost) with protective garments for hygiene and infection control for use during the student placement.

At times, the placement provider may reasonably require you to travel during the student placement in order to perform allocated tasks. In the event that this is required, travel arrangements will generally be made by the student placement provider at no cost to you. In some cases however, you may be required to arrange travel at your own cost. You should contact your course coordinator if you believe the request is unreasonable or not possible based on your personal circumstances.

Accessing help and support

The University provides a number of support services for students undertaking student placements. Additionally, each student placement provider should provide information on their own services and procedures to handle different scenarios.

In an emergency, follow the procedures of the placement provider or call 000.

A list of student support services is available on our website:

students.unimelb.edu.au/balance

Students on rural placements can contact the Going Rural Health team for assistance or advice:

goingruralhealth.com.au/contact

If an incident occurs

There are a number of critical and non-critical incidents that can occur when undertaking a student placement, particularly in a busy work environment.

Contact your placement supervisor and also notify your department's student placement coordinator or course coordinator as soon as possible.

The University provides automatic coverage for personal accident, professional indemnity and public liability insurance. Further information is available online:

students.unimelb.edu.au/admin/insurance

Critical incidents

Critical incidents that may occur include:

- A patient or client fatality or near fatality
- Acts of violence or threat of violence to patients, clients, employees or you
- Physical or sexual assault, harassment or bullying of patients, clients, employees or you
- Major failure in internal process at the host organisation; eg fraudulent activity
- Prolonged loss of access to computing and telecommunications infrastructure
- Major vandalism

If you are involved in or witness a critical incident, you must tell your placement supervisor in the first instance, or other appropriate senior person if your supervisor is implicated in or otherwise connected to the incident. You must also notify the University as soon as possible. The University staff member will discuss the incident with you and assist you in accessing appropriate support services.

The staff member may also notify other University staff as appropriate, including your Head of School, legal services, etc.

Professional indemnity and other insurances

The University provides automatic coverage for students under a number of insurance policies, including Professional Indemnity and Medical Malpractice Insurance. This insurance is for legal liability arising out of a breach of professional duty by reason of any negligent act, error or omission committed or alleged to have been committed by a student.

Information regarding all of our student-related insurance policies is available online: students.unimelb.edu.au/admin/insurance

Additional insurance providers

Some students may be able to access additional insurance cover through the relevant professional association (eg Australian Physiotherapy Association, Australian Dental Association) or a private defence organisation (eg Avant, MDA National, Medical Indemnity Protection Society)

Legal Advice

While the University provides professional indemnity insurance, it does not provide legal advice to students. If you need legal advice for any reason, it will need to be obtained through the University's indemnity insurer or an independent legal practitioner. The following organisations provide free legal advice to students:

- University of Melbourne Student Union
umsu.unimelb.edu.au/support/legal
- Federation of Community Legal Centres
communitylaw.org.au

References

Government resources

Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights:

www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/participation-and-communication/australian-charter-healthcare-rights

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA):

ahpra.gov.au

Australian Immunisation Handbook:

immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook10-home

Police Checks – Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission:

acic.gov.au/our-services/national-police-checks

Vaccination for healthcare workers – Victorian Department of Health:

www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/adults/vaccination-workplace/vaccination-healthcare-workers

Working with Children Checks – Victorian Department of Justice:

workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

University of Melbourne resources

Going Rural Health

goingruralhealth.com.au

Insurance:

students.unimelb.edu.au/admin/insurance

Intellectual property:

umsu.unimelb.edu.au/support/advocacy/intellectual-property

Legal advice – University of Melbourne Student Union:

umsu.unimelb.edu.au/support/legal

Melbourne Policy Library:

policy.unimelb.edu.au

Overseas placements – Melbourne Global Mobility:

mobility.unimelb.edu.au/outbound/programs/work-internship

Placement policies and procedures:

mdhs.unimelb.edu.au/study/current-students/placements

Student Support Services:

students.unimelb.edu.au/balance

Professional associations

Audiology Australia:

audiology.asn.au

Australian Association of Social Workers:

aasw.asn.au

Australian Dental Association:

ada.org.au

Australian Medical Association:

ama.com.au

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation:

anmf.org.au

Australian Physiotherapy Association:

physiotherapy.asn.au

Australian Psychological Society:

psychology.org.au

Optometry Australia:

optometry.org.au

Speech Pathology Australia:

speechpathologyaustralia.org.au







Key contacts

Your student placement coordinator or course coordinator are your first points of contact for information or assistance regarding clinical placements.

If you have questions about the documentation requirements, contact the Health Hub:

mdhs.unimelb.edu.au/about/contact

In An Emergency

For emergency assistance while on placement, follow the procedures of your placement provider or contact 000.

University of Melbourne security can provide limited assistance to offsite students and can be contacted 24/7 on (03) 8344 6666.

If You Can't Attend Placement Due To Illness Or Any Other Reason

Contact your placement supervisor and also notify your department's student placement coordinator or course coordinator as early as possible. We will endeavour to arrange make-up placement days wherever possible.

Feedback

The University is committed to providing the best possible learning experience for our students. If you have feedback that you wish to provide at any time during or after your student placement, make contact with your course coordinator.