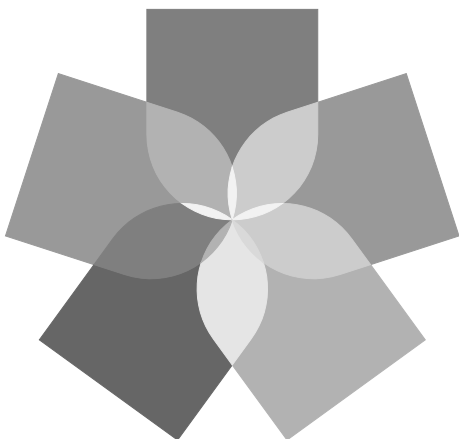




HSW314/331/415

# Social Work Field Education

FIELD MANUAL



FACULTY OF HEALTH, MEDICINE, NURSING  
AND BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES

These study materials have been produced for units offered by the Faculty HMNBS.

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# Bachelor of Social Work Field Education Manual 2011

PREPARED BY NORAH HOSKEN AND JOANNE SMITH

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### **Acknowledgement of Traditional Land Owners**

Deakin University would like to acknowledge that the present site of the Melbourne Campus at Burwood is located on the land of the Wurundjeri people, the Geelong Campus at Waurn Ponds and Geelong Waterfront Campus are located on the land of the Wathaurong people, and the Warrnambool Campus is located on the land of the Gunditjmara people. They belong to these lands, have walked on them for thousands of years, and continue to care for them and nurture them.



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### Field Education Unit staff

The Field Education team are Norah Hosken (Field Education Coordinator) and T.B.A (Field Education Officer). In general, one of us is available each day for consultation in person or via telephone or email. Our telephones are equipped with voicemail for your messages.

The web address to access Field Education documentation is:  
<<http://www.deakin.edu.au/hmnbs/hsd/fieldwork/socialwork.php>>  
(retrieved 10 December 2010).

We encourage students and supervisors to download documents off the web site rather than using appendices contained in this handbook.

### Trimester dates

Trimester 1	07 March–17 June
Mid-year break	20 June for two weeks
Trimester 2	11 July–21 October

### Field placement dates

Block 1	HSW314	3rd year	Trimester 1	(February to June)
Block 2	HSW415	4th year	Trimester 2	(July to November)

# Introduction to Social Work Field Education

The Bachelor of Social Work was set up at Deakin University to meet the growing need for qualified social work practitioners in regional and rural areas. At the top of the list of the University's core commitments is "rural and regional engagement". One of the University's primary goals is to advance the interests and aspirations of communities in rural and regional Australia.

Field education is central to social work courses, not only in Australia but everywhere in the world where social work is taught. The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) has set national minimum requirements for field education in social work courses. These requirements must be met for graduates to be eligible for membership of the professional body.

Field education is a core component of social work education and the following considerations must be incorporated in field education programs:

- Programs must be consistent with the general principles identified for social work education;
- Programs must have the status of a full academic subject;
- Field education is to be a cooperative endeavour between the university, the student and field educators (practitioners supervising students in agencies);
- Programs must employ strategies to ensure that students integrate theory and practice.

(AASW 2008, p. 7)

## Philosophy

Field education is based on the following principles:

- Students learn best by 'doing';
- Experiential learning occurs best in an authentic workplace;
- Learning is enhanced within a supportive, safe environment in which the role of 'student' is clearly defined;
- Placements provide benefits to students *and* the profession via an exchange process.

## Aim

Field education provides opportunities for students to integrate theory with practice and develop the required skills and knowledge base to meet the Australian Association of Social Workers Practice Standards (AASW 2003). As part of the placement process, students need to demonstrate their knowledge of and competence in the Practice Standards for Social Workers.

### **Student commitment to Field Education**

It is understood that students undertake the Bachelor of Social Work program with the knowledge that there are placement requirements. Students who work must be prepared to undertake their placements part time or make alternative arrangements for employment during placement – in other words, employment arrangements need to be negotiated around placement requirements. Students may not interrupt their placement with travel or holiday leave.

### **Deakin graduate attributes**

The specific Deakin attributes that will be fostered during field education include the ability to:

- understand professional, social, economic and cultural contexts of social work delivery
- communicate orally and in written form across a range of contexts
- self organise and manage
- work collaboratively and in a team
- critically analyse, problem solve and demonstrate creative thinking
- demonstrate a commitment to independent and lifelong learning
- show awareness of ethics, social responsibility and cultural diversity
- appreciate international perspectives in the global context of social work delivery.

## About this manual

The *Bachelor of Social Work Field Education Manual* is a reference for on- and off-campus Deakin students, their Field Educators (and Agency Task Supervisors) and Deakin Field Education Unit staff. It covers all aspects of the Field Education placement, from initial contact through to final assessment. The manual details the Field Education policies and procedures, and the assessment process for HSW314 *Social Work Field Education A* and HSW415 *Social Work Field Education B*. It also contains templates (in the appendices) for the various forms and assessment documents that students and Field Educators will need when organising and undertaking the placement. For ease of completing documents, templates can be downloaded from the Field Education website:

<<http://www.deakin.edu.au/hmnbs/hsd/fieldwork/socialwork/swdownloads.php>>  
(retrieved 10 December 2010).

### **Student responsibilities**

It is each student's responsibility to read this manual and make sure that they understand the requirements of the field placement and the policies and procedures that relate to it.

It is understood that, by reading this manual, the student agrees to abide by the Field Education policies and procedures outlined here – ignorance of these policies and procedures will not exempt the student from their responsibilities.

After reading the manual, students are welcome to contact Field Education Unit staff with questions.

### **Supervisor responsibilities**

Field Educators (and Agency Task Supervisors) should also read this manual, and are welcome to contact Field Education Unit staff with questions.

Appendix 6 gives an overview of the Social Work program at Deakin, including unit descriptions. We recommend that Field Educators discuss this information before starting to draft the Field Education Learning Plan with their placement students.

## A quick guide to Field Education placements

This page gives a summary of placement information for students. It is to be used as a guide only – please note that it is essential to read and understand the entire manual before starting the placement process.

<b>Duration</b>	70 days – undertaken 3, 4 or 5 days per week.
<b>Timing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3rd year: trimester one</li> <li>• 4th year: trimester two</li> </ul>
<b>Academic prerequisites</b>	See the current <i>Undergraduate studies handbook</i>
<b>Other requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a student profile and submit a copy of your résumé</li> <li>• Attend pre-placement interviews</li> <li>• Attend the one-day pre-placement workshop <i>or</i> its teleconference equivalent (compulsory HSW314)</li> </ul>
<b>Placement settings and fields of practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One placement must have a rural focus</li> <li>• The two placements must be in different fields of practice and with different organisations</li> <li>• At least one placement must entail direct service delivery</li> </ul>
<b>Documentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police check</li> <li>• Working with Children Check (if applicable)</li> <li>• Drivers licence</li> </ul>
<b>Conduct while on placement</b>	<p>You are expected to follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policies and procedures in this manual</li> <li>• The policies and procedures of the placement agency</li> <li>• The AASW Code of Ethics.</li> </ul>
<b>Class participation</b>	Three, day-long integration seminars <i>or</i> weekly DSO sessions
<b>Supervision</b>	<p>Provided through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-site Field Educator – a qualified Social Worker with two years experience, within the agency</li> <li>• Agency Task Supervisor – a suitable staff member in the placement agency (where there is also an External Field Educator)</li> <li>• University Liaison Person – a Field Education Unit staff member or suitable person appointed locally (min. two contacts per placement)</li> </ul>
<b>Learning and assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field Education Placement Contract (Appendix 1)</li> <li>• Safety Audit (Appendix 2)</li> <li>• Field Education Learning Plan (Appendix 3)</li> <li>• Mid Placement Review and Final Placement Assessment Report (Appendix 3)</li> <li>• Critical Incident Report (Appendix 5)</li> </ul> <p>We encourage students and supervisors to download documents off the web site rather than using appendices contained in this handbook.</p>

# Field Education policies and procedures

## Introduction

The Deakin University Bachelor of Social Work Field Education Policies and Procedures are developed in accordance with the AASW Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards (2008). These policies and procedures are designed to cover the entire placement process, from enrolment in the unit, to allocation of placements, through to day-to-day placement duties and final assessment.

The Social Work Field Education Policies and Procedures are also governed by policy developed for the wider University. Students should note that Deakin University policies will take precedence in any issue of dispute. University policies may be accessed via the Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Sciences office at the University or via the Deakin University website: <http://theguide.deakin.edu.au/> (retrieved 10 December 2010).

# Placement requirements

## Academic prerequisites

Students must pass the prerequisite units for HSW314 or HSW415, as per the current *Undergraduate studies handbook*, before beginning their placement.

## Other requirements

Once enrolled in HSW314, students must complete a compulsory pre-placement workshop (or its teleconference equivalent if unable to attend in person). Agencies generally expect students to hold a full drivers licence by the time they start their first placement.

## Travel

Costs associated with travel to and from placement are the responsibility of the student. It is expected that agencies fully reimburse students for travel costs incurred *during* the working day for agency purposes.

Students must have a full driver's licence if they are to drive the agency vehicle. Note that students are not permitted to transport clients in their own private vehicles.

Students should not use their own vehicles for placement work.

## Placement duration

Students complete 70 days per placement during the agency's normal working hours provided this is a minimum of 7 hours per day and a maximum of 8 hours 20 minutes per day. Anything over 8 hours 20 minutes should be taken as time in lieu during the placement period according to the agency policies. Each placement must total a minimum of 490 hours. (The AASW requires that students spend a minimum of 980 hours in at least two separate placements during their course).

In the rare circumstances where an agency's hours of operation are less than 7 hours per day arrangements will be negotiated with and approved by the Field Education Coordinator.

A full-time placement will run for 14 weeks. Part-time placements must be undertaken at a minimum of three days per week. Part-time placements take longer, and need to begin earlier. For example, a three-day-a-week placement runs for 23 weeks, and a four-day-a-week placement runs for 17.5 weeks.

## Placement timing

There are two placements, one in Trimester 1, Year 3 (HSW314) and one in Trimester 2, Year 4 (HSW415). A target starting date will be set for placements, and integration seminars (or equivalent DSO sessions) are organised in reference to the starting date. Students who negotiate for a part-time placement will usually begin their placement earlier than the target starting date in order to finish before the next Trimester commences.

## **Placement setting and field of practice**

The Australian Association of Social Workers stipulates that the following are essential requirements:

- The two placements must be in different fields of practice;
- The two placements should be in different organisations;
- At least one of the placements must involve face-to-face, direct service delivery.

As a general rule, placement agencies do not accept students who have been former service users and do not accept students who have relatives or partners working in the same office or in senior positions in the agency.

## **Rural placement requirement**

The BSW at Deakin was initially set up to meet the growing need for qualified social work practitioners in regional and rural areas and the university's aims and objectives reflect this commitment to rural and regional communities. For this reason students in the BSW at Deakin are required to undertake at least one placement with a rural focus, looking at rural issues, but not necessarily in a rural or remote location.

Learning for rural practice will be reflected in the goals established in the Field Education Learning Plan and the learning areas set out in the Mid Placement Review and Final Assessment Report (Appendix 3). Students who wish to nominate a placement as their rural focus placement will need to discuss this at the agency placement interview, to ascertain if the activities and nature of the agency and client work enable the required three rural focus goals in the Field Education Learning Plan. A rural focus placement may involve direct service delivery or project or research work. It may be undertaken in a rural location or with an agency servicing rural based service users. The goals for a rural focus placement include students gaining an understanding of issues for rural service users, communities and practitioners.

There are many ways of defining rural, but for the purposes of placement we adopt Brian Cheers' position that rural means 'areas outside the capital cities or large regional centres' (Cheers, 1998). However, a placement in a city, outlying city or regional area can be considered if the organisation clearly services rural clients or communities or the organisation can provide students with an opportunity to undertake project or research work with a rural focus.

Students may choose to do two rural focus placements providing they meet all other field education requirements. There are always a range of remote placement opportunities to discuss with interested students.

Students are referred to the Rural Resources folder at the Social Work site in DSO for information on opportunities for additional support and scholarships for students completing compulsory rural focus placements in rural locations during their studies.

Students seeking rural placements in Victoria and South Australia may be able to receive support from the Greater Green Triangle University Department of Rural Health. Formed through a Deakin University and Flinders University partnership, the Department promotes rural and remote health education. Students undertaking a placement in the 'triangle region' can access high standard, low cost accommodation in Camperdown, Hamilton, Horsham, Millicent, Mount Gambier, Naracoorte, Portland and Warrnambool. For more information, please visit the Department web site <[www.greaterhealth.org](http://www.greaterhealth.org)> (retrieved 10 December 2010) and click on 'Students'.

## Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL)

In accordance with the AASW Accreditation Standards (effective from 2009) credit for the first Field Education placement or part thereof may be possible for students who have completed Field Education placements prior to entry into the social work program or in recognition of prior work experience.

### *AASW Policy*

Section 4.3.5 of the AASW Accreditation Standards refers to ‘Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning in Field Education’. It states:

“The AASW recognizes that students may enter their social work degree study program with a breadth of prior learning and experience in the human services sector. The AASW policy for credit transfer and recognition of prior learning is detailed in Part 1, section 7 and 8. The policy as it relates to field education is outlined further below:

- (i) Credit for the first field education placement or part thereof, may be possible on the basis of recognition of prior work experience or the completion of field education placements completed prior to entry into the social work program.
- (ii) Performance outcomes for first placement based on the *AASW Practice Standards* and *Code of Ethics* will be used to assess students for RPL.
- (iii) In accordance with the policies in this document credit for the first field education placement or part thereof, will take account of:
  - the currency of the work experience (minimum 5FTE in last 10 years), with a minimum of 3 years practice in a relevant context
  - the use of social work practice skills such as assessment and counselling
  - familiarity and use of a range of methods such as case work and community work
  - verification of student’s claim by a qualified Social Worker who can attest to its accuracy.
- (iv) Recognition of Prior Learning for field education must be thoroughly assessed.
- (v) In order to be granted RPL for field education the student must provide evidence that they have met the standards and performance outcomes for the first placement. This should include for example, job descriptions accompanied by referee reports; skills assessment and critical reflection on placement or work experience.”

It is Deakin policy that students may receive maximum of 21 credit points of advance standing toward the Bachelor of Social Work.

### *Deakin University Hurdle Requirements*

- Any student wishing to have RPL applied for first placement is required to make a formal application for RPL to be considered.
- Application due dates will be strictly adhered to and students will be advised of these and invited to submit a written application in accordance with the procedure outlined below.
- Applications will be submitted to the Field Education Coordinator in the first instance.

We have developed a portfolio assessment process to cover recognition of work experience and will assess students’ claims against the AASW Practice Standards.

Students should submit a portfolio comprising the following forms of evidence for RPL:

- Overall statement as to why they believe their work experience reflects beginning competency in demonstrating the AASW Practice Standards.
- Personal details; include contact details and CV.
- Details of relevant work experience with a minimum of 3 (FTE) years practice in a relevant context in the last 5 years. This includes job descriptions and examples from practice. It is expected that social work supervision would have been provided for a minimum of 25 hours and have occurred during the last 5 years. A letter from a qualified Social Worker who has provided this professional supervision needs to be included with this application noting details of the time frame and approximate frequency of that supervision.
- Students should argue their case against each of the learning objectives from HSW314, giving examples of their use of social work practice skills such as assessment and counselling and further demonstrating familiarity and use of a range of methods such as case work and community work.
- The student's claim should be verified by a qualified Social Worker who can attest to its accuracy.
- The names and contact details of 2 referees are to be provided.

A 3,000 word critical reflection on their work experience, demonstrating integration of theory and practice, social work values and ethics (AASW Accreditation Standards Section 7.2.3 refers). The submission should attend to the requirements and assessment criteria of the Critical Analysis component of HSW314.

The Portfolio will be assessed by a panel of Deakin social work staff. Students may be required to meet with this panel and should be prepared orally to elaborate upon and if necessary defend their portfolio.

The panel may decide:

- to require major or minor revisions to the Portfolio
- to decline approval for RPL
- to provide approval for partial RPL requiring students to complete a shorter placement. In line with AASW policy (4.3 (iv) no placement will be shorter than 40 days).
- to approve an application for RPL in full.

An RPL form can be downloaded off the field education web site and submitted with appropriate documents to the Field Education Coordinator.

*We wish to acknowledge the original work undertaken by Judy Williams, MSW Field Education Coordinator, RMIT University.*

## Work based placements

Field Education Unit staff strongly encourage students to seek placements outside their own place of employment. To be considered, an application for a placement in the student's current workplace must be submitted as a formal request directly to the Field Education Coordinator. This request must be supported by a written proposal with:

- a description of the program or department for the placement setting and the type of work the student will undertake
- an explanation of learning objectives for the placement.

Students will also need to include documentation, such as position descriptions, letters or copies of qualifications, to prove that:

- the placement is in a different program or department to their normal work setting
- the type of work to be undertaken is different to their normal work
- the placement supervisor (Field Educator) is someone other than their usual supervisor in the workplace
- the placement supervisor is eligible for membership of the AASW
- the student will complete their placement in a different branch to that of their usual work setting
- the student will be placed with a work team or colleagues different from those with whom he or she usually works
- the student will be afforded 'student status' during the term of the placement.

The proposal must include signatures of the student's current supervisor or agency manager and the proposed placement supervisor acknowledging the student has "student status" for the placement and consenting to the placement arrangements. The application form can be downloaded off the field education web site and submitted with appropriate documents to the Field Education Coordinator.

Under very exceptional circumstances a second placement in the place of work may be considered for approval. Such exceptional circumstances must be demonstrated to be beyond that experienced by the majority of the student body (i.e., field placement is a core compulsory component of the BSW curriculum, attendance at which may result in financial loss during the period for many if not most students).

Exceptional circumstances may be considered for such things as:

- Remote/Rural Locations: lack of suitable alternative organisations for placement within a reasonable distance to the student.
- Physical Impairment/Disability: Mobility, support, access and equipment requirements of students that would exclude certain possibilities in placement.
- Unique Opportunity: For example, the opportunity to be supervised by an expert practitioner of significant international recognition in a particular field of social work.

### **National police record check**

Because most agencies require a police record check for students on placement, students should apply for this in the trimester prior to their placement to ensure it is received in good time for their first placement interview. Students can complete a National Police Check form online from their State police web site <[http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document\\_ID=274](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=274)> (retrieved 10 December 2010).

For Victorian students, Students need to complete the form and may quote reference no. CVF99/152 and have their application signed by a Field Education Unit staff member to obtain the student/volunteer fee. It is the student's responsibility to forward the form to the police.

On receiving their police check, students must send a certified copy to the Field Education Coordinator. Students also need to take the original of the police check to their pre-placement interviews. It is the students' responsibility to inform the Field Educator of the status of their record at the interview.

### **Working with Children Check (WWCC)**

All students undertaking a placement with the Department of Human Services and many other agencies in Victoria must obtain a Working with Children Check (WWCC) prior to commencing their placement. Students apply for a WWCC check using the 'volunteer' status. There is no cost. Application forms are available at Australia Post and more detailed information can be obtained from the Department of Justice Information Line 1300 652 879.

Please note that this check can only be used for a study placement or volunteer work. It is an offence to use a WWCC obtained under 'volunteer' status for paid employment purposes. Any student seeking employment in child protection or juvenile justice after their placement must apply for a WWCC for employment purposes.

The Victorian web site address for further information about the WWCC is <<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren>> (retrieved 10 December 2010).

Students undertaking placements in other states will need to contact the relevant body in that state. A web search on 'working with children in [state name]' is a good place to start.

### **Insurance**

The type of insurance applied will depend on the particular circumstances involved.

The principal classes of insurance are:

- Public Liability
- Professional Liability
- Personal Accident Insurance

Current details of these insurance policies can be found on the University's insurance web site at <<http://www.deakin.edu.au/divisions/risk/>> (retrieved 10 December 2010). Students and Field Educators should discuss any insurance concerns with Field Education Unit staff, and refer to Deakin's insurance web site regarding making a claim as soon as practicable.

## **Occupational health and safety**

### *Vaccinations*

We strongly recommended that students undergo a course of hepatitis B vaccinations prior to placement. As a full course of vaccinations takes six months, students should see their on-campus doctor or their own GP to arrange this as early as possible.

### *Disabilities and health issues*

It is a student's responsibility to disclose disabilities or health issues that may affect their ability to carry out a placement. Ideally, this should be done at the pre-placement interview. Students are referred to Field Education Unit staff and to the Disability Resource Centre for advice and support.

### *OHS policies*

It is the student's responsibility to familiarise themselves with agency OHS policies and guidelines during the first week of the placement. A template for an agency Safety Audit can be found in Appendix 2 and on the Field Education website. This needs to be completed and sent back to the Field Education Coordinator with the Field Education Learning Plan.

Students are not to be left on duty in agencies without the presence of other agency staff or immediate access to them. Refer to 'Agency risk reduction guidelines' in Appendix 2 for further information.

## **Notes for off-campus students**

There are some important differences that some off-campus students should note regarding their placement.

- Off-campus students who live outside the Geelong and Melbourne area are welcome to provide information about local possibilities for placement.
- Off-campus students are more likely to have a University Liaison Person engaged by the University from the student's locality.
- Off-campus students are welcome to attend integration days and all other on-campus programs that are part of the Field Education program.

## **Notes for honours and postgraduate students**

### *Honours*

In normal circumstances those students undertaking Honours studies in their final year of the BSW will complete HSW415 placement part time (three days a week). This will allow students to dedicate time to conducting research activities and writing up their theses. As per AASW guidelines, the placement is for a total of 70 days. Please refer to the Bachelor of Social Work Honours handbook for further details.

# Finding and allocating placements

## Introduction

Deakin University aims for flexibility in all aspects of teaching and learning. We think it is important for students to be informed of how we find, allocate and set parameters for placements. However, this is a tall order when working with large numbers of students going on placement all over Australia and overseas and the university has responsibility for making final placement allocations to students. Placements are increasingly difficult to obtain. We generally obtain the required number of placements for our students, but there are a limited number, and we are often competing with other universities for these. It is not always possible to obtain placements which meet students' preference for both field of practice and location. Although you may be offered a placement outside of your nominated areas of interest, the Social Work Field Education Team has assessed that there are significant learning opportunities and appropriate supervision in all placements that we offer. Part of being a social worker is to be open to learning and engaging in a range of contexts, with a variety of people. Unless there are very strong reasons it would be expected that students accept the placement offered at interview. If a student believes there are substantial reasons to not accept a placement offer, they will need to submit these reasons in writing to the Field Education Coordinator for consideration. If a student does not accept a placement offer after interview, we cannot guarantee another placement offer in the same trimester. This may then mean that students would have to delay their studies. As mentioned at the pre-placement workshop the placement interview is an opportunity to present yourself to the field. It is important that you prepare for, and engage in, the interview in a professional and interested manner.

The following section explains our attempts to implement a consultative placement process.

### *Finding placements: A consultative process*

Social Work staff, the Field Education Consultative Committee and students all contribute to this process. Within the Deakin Social Work program we maintain a database of agencies located in the Barwon South West Region and try to keep this up to date as possible. We are continually developing links with agencies, organisations and other educational institutions throughout the state, interstate and overseas to meet the placement needs of our students. Deakin Social Work has entered into formal agreements with several agencies and welcomes further opportunities to do so.

Deakin University is a member of the Combined Schools of Social Work, a cooperative of field placement staff from Victorian universities, which operates a combined database of agencies which offer placements in Melbourne. There is one mail out to every agency on the Combined Schools database annually. Agencies who respond can nominate the university programs they wish to work with.

In line with the Combined Schools' commitment to a collaborative process and efforts to avoid agencies being repeatedly contacted for placements, **students seeking a placement in the Melbourne area are instructed not to pursue their own placement or make contact with any agencies.** All negotiations regarding Melbourne placements must be made through the Field Education Unit staff at Deakin.

## **Placement recruitment and allocation**

Students should note that the responsibility for recruitment, negotiation and final selection of placements remains with the Field Education Unit staff.

Students cannot be placed in an agency where a family member currently works, or where family members are currently clients. Students usually cannot be placed in agencies where they are or have been a client. It is the responsibility of the student to discuss this with the Field Education coordinator if there are any concerns or queries.

### *Placements in the Melbourne and Geelong regions*

Whether on- or off-campus, students are not permitted to 'scout' for their own placements in Melbourne and Geelong. If students know of a potential placement in Melbourne or Geelong, they must ask Field Education Unit staff to make a formal approach to the agency on their behalf.

University staff are responsible for assigning placements that can provide individual students with the learning experiences they need to meet the assessment criteria for the unit.

### *Placements outside the Melbourne and Geelong regions*

Students seeking placements in regional Victoria (excluding Geelong) or interstate are encouraged to scout for appropriate placement opportunities in consultation with Field Education Unit staff. This is because Field Education Unit staff are unlikely to have a very comprehensive list of suitable national agencies.

At the initial stage, students should simply obtain the name and contact details of a relevant staff member, and, if possible, find out whether the agency may be interested in taking on a placement student. Students must then bring this information back to the University – we will contact the agency and negotiate the placement conditions.

### *Placement setting and field of practice*

Students are consulted about their fields of interest (see 'Students profiles and expressions of interest' below). The AASW Minimum Standards requires that the two placements should be in two different settings and two different fields of practice. AASW policy further advises that the student seek experience in fields other than those in which they have previously been employed. At least one placement must have a rural focus and in at least one placement students must be given the opportunity to practise interpersonal helping skills in addition to other methods of intervention.

### *Student profiles and expressions of interest*

During the trimester preceding placement, students are required to complete and return a personal profile form, identifying their learning goals, preferred fields of practice and areas of challenge.

The résumé students are to provide should focus on the experiences, skills, knowledge, strengths and attributes they bring to field education. The Field Education office will keep a copy of this résumé as an aid to recruiting appropriate placements, and students must take a copy to their pre-placement interviews.

## **Pre-placement interviews**

Students will normally be provided with one pre-placement interview per trimester. If the student is accepted for placement by the agency after this interview, Field Education Unit staff will expect that the student will undertake this placement unless the student can demonstrate good reasons why an alternate placement should be sought. These reasons will need to be put in writing and submitted to the Field Education Coordinator.

### *Preparing for the interview*

Students should research their prospective placement by reading the agency's web site or annual report. They should also familiarise themselves with the relevant field of practice (e.g. criminal justice, education, mental health) by reviewing material from previous units, searching out recent journal and newspaper articles from the library, or speaking to people with experience in the field of practice.

Students should compile a short list of questions about the agency and the field of practice to ask at the interview. The questions should show their interest in and understanding of the agency and the field. Students should also think about their learning goals and areas of interest in the prospective agency's field and convey these in the interview.

### *Attending the interview*

Students should arrive on time and neatly dressed. As well as notes and questions, they will need to bring:

- Original Police Check documentation
- Working with Children Check (if applicable)
- Field Educator interview feedback form
- Résumé
- Driver's licence for sighting.

### *Interview purpose*

The main purpose of the pre-placement interview is for student and Field Educator to determine whether they can meet each other's expectations.

The interview also offers students a chance to demonstrate professional self-presentation and practise for future job interviews. Well before the pre-placement interview stage, students become engaged in the learning process by researching the agency and drawing up a 'wish list' of learning goals. They are already being asked to demonstrate self-presentation and negotiation skills. The interview feedback form will help students increase their professional self-awareness and should translate into better job interview skills down the track.

Finally, the interview is an opportunity to learn more about the fields of social work practice and to connect with practising Social Workers. Reading about an agency in preparation for an interview and talking to practitioners there gives insight into working in that field, and that agency. It is also a good time for students to begin to develop professional contacts.

### **Confirming a placement**

When we have received feedback from students and Field Educators, we will begin the process of finalising placements – contacting students and Field Educators to confirm the placement offer and confirm a starting date. Formal confirmation letters and contracts are sent to the agency, as well as assessment documents, and a copy of the *Social Work Field Education Manual*. External Field Educators and University Liaison Persons are then appointed as required.

## Planning and organising the placement

Planning for placements begins in the preceding trimester. Full-time placements usually begin during the first week of trimester, and run for 14 weeks. Part-time placements take longer, and need to begin earlier. For example, a three-day-a-week placement runs for 23 weeks, and a four-day-a-week placement runs for 17.5 weeks. Mid-trimester breaks and holidays do not apply during placements.

Week 1	Placement commences
1st to 10th day of placement	Orientation phase
10th to 15th day of placement	Field Education Learning Plan completed First liaison contact
35th to 40th day of placement	Mid-placement Review Report due Second liaison contact
60th to 65th day of placement	Final evaluation
70th day of placement	Placement ends
70th day	Final Placement Assessment Report due

### Pre-placement workshops

Prior to going out on their first placement, on-campus, local off-campus and international students in HSW331 and HSW314 attend compulsory pre-placement workshops. Off-campus students who cannot attend the workshops will have tele-tutorials instead. These workshops prepare students to go out into the field and will cover topics such as preparing for interviews, field education supervision, safety, and writing the Field Education Learning Plan.

Pre-placement workshops will be provided to Institute of Koorie Education (The Institute) students during the final on-campus intensive prior to the placement trimester or through tele-tutorials. Institute of Koorie Education students will be advised in advance which preparation format will be used.

### Office space and resources

Many agencies operate in less than perfect physical environments. However, we hope that students on placement will be provided with a permanent space from which to work. The ideal is an office, but, at a minimum, what students really need is a base somewhere away from high traffic where they can sit to make notes, store their paperwork and carry out record-keeping duties. Creating a proper work space for the student greatly enhances the student's sense of belonging, as well as other staff's perceptions of the student – this in turn influences how they respond to him or her. If needed for their duties, the student should have access to a computer and telephone. Remember that they may need some basic instruction on how to use these and other office equipment such as faxes and photocopiers before they get started.

### **Orientation phase**

The first two weeks of placement are generally considered to be an orientation phase, when the student becomes familiar with the agency structure, philosophy, mandate, policies and procedures, worker roles and client groups. Students are strongly advised to acquaint themselves with the agency's structure and general administrative processes as soon as they can – the orientation phase is the best time to do this.

In these first weeks, the student would not usually undertake direct client work, but should be able to observe the Field Educator interacting with clients. During and following this phase, the student and Field Educator will complete a Field Education Learning Plan (see Appendix 3) together, based on identified student learning needs and the learning opportunities the agency can offer. These are then submitted to the Field Education Unit by day 20, by which time the student should be well into their duties.

# Day-to-day conduct on placement

## Introduction

While on placement, students are expected to comply with the placement agency's standards for behaviour. Before starting a placement, students should ask their Field Educator or Agency Task Supervisor what is expected of them in terms of punctuality, dress, workload and organisational responsibilities.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriately professional manner at all times, in accordance with the AASW Code of Ethics (see section on Ethics).

Placement agencies should ensure that students become as much a member of the agency as possible. Agency staff should be briefed to treat placement students as entry-level peers and, where possible, extend to them the same privileges and responsibilities granted to new professional recruits.

## Attendance

Students are expected to be in attendance at the agency for the full number of negotiated hours per week, as set out in their Field Education Placement Contract. The University requires students to be on placement a minimum of three days per week.

Students are expected to undertake their placement during the hours of operation of the agency, which may include evening or weekend hours. Students must make sure that an agency staff member knows where they are going when they leave agency premises during set working hours.

Students are exempt from attending placement on regular public holidays, weekends (except where this is a norm) and other times when the agency is officially closed. If an agency is closed for more than one week students will need to have a discussion with Field Educators and Field Education Unit staff to negotiate an alternative appropriate plan for the period. Students who are undertaking a placement at a school will need to negotiate a plan for school holidays.

Students are entitled to public holidays observed by the agency during their placement: these will be counted as placement days and this time off does not need to be made up.

## Overtime

If students are required to undertake official agency activities that extend beyond normal working hours, time in lieu must be negotiated with the Field Educator beforehand and in accordance with agency policies. Time in lieu must be taken during the period of the placement, not at the end.

## **Absences**

We understand that unexpected events, such as illness or family emergencies, can arise any time. We ask that students do their best to deal with the immediate problem while retaining responsibility for placement commitments and following agency policies for sick leave and absences.

If a student needs to be absent from the agency, they should promptly notify their Field Educator (or Agency Task Supervisor) so that appointments can be cancelled and other matters deferred appropriately.

If a student misses three or more days through sickness, they will need to provide a medical certificate.

If a student misses more than three days for any reason, they must notify Field Education Unit staff to arrange for the placement to be extended by the number of days missed.

Mid Trimester breaks and holidays do not apply on placement.

Absence from placement for more than two weeks may jeopardise the student's learning, and individual situations will be addressed by the Field Education Coordinator. As withdrawal from the placement may be one outcome, it is critical that the student advise the University as soon as possible to discuss how best to deal with their absence.

## **Travel, accommodation and other expenses**

Travel and other expenses incurred getting to and from the placement is the students' responsibility. Accommodation expenses are also the students' responsibility. Students undertaking a rural placement in Victoria and South Australia may be able to access low-cost accommodation while on placement: see 'Rural placement requirement' on page 9.

If students incur expenses in the course of their placement activities (e.g. petrol costs for driving to visit a client), then the normal reimbursement policies and procedures of the agency will apply. If the placement agency does not have a formal policy on expenses, the student should consult their Field Educator before agreeing to carry out the activity.

## **Agency vehicles**

In some placements, students will be required to drive an agency vehicle. This should be discussed at the pre-placement interview. A full drivers license is usually required.

## **AASW Ethics and Practice Standards**

Students will need to access the Australian Association of Social Workers Web site and download the current AASW Code of Ethics (2010); the AASW Practice Standards for Social Workers (2003); and the AASW practice Standards for Mental Health Social Workers (2008). It is strongly recommended that students have a printed version of these documents with them on placement to refer to.

## **Confidentiality**

Ethical behaviour for Social Workers includes a commitment to confidentiality. 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 or political matters.

In particular, any information related to users of the agency's services *must* be presumed confidential unless stated otherwise. Students should never discuss clients using identifying information at home, on DSO or in the classroom. Remember that in small communities almost any information about a client will identify him or her.

Students should discuss with their Field Educator how material can be presented for the purposes of classroom or DSO learning while preserving confidentiality. Often, consent to release information may be needed from the service user, not just appropriate agency staff – if in doubt, students should ask their Field Educator and refer to the AASW Code of Ethics.

# Supervision

## Introduction

Supervision has been a central feature of social work from its earliest beginnings, not only for students and inexperienced workers, but also for experienced workers. It is a key feature in career development and management. Kadushin (1992) identifies three elements of supervision which should be addressed during the supervision session: education, support and administration.

While on placement, the student and Field Educator develop a co-operative working relationship which enables the student to derive the maximum benefit from the field placement, and provides the student with a role model for future supervision. For the purposes of student placement supervision the AASW recommends one and a half hours of formal supervision for every five days (35 hours) in the field.

It is helpful to make a distinction between formal and informal supervision. There is an agenda for formal supervision, which usually takes place at a set – and, ideally, an uninterrupted – time. In formal sessions, the Field Education Learning Plan is reviewed, directions are confirmed or reset, and students are provided with opportunities to critically reflect upon their placement experiences.

The prime time for learning, however, is right after an experience or event. Whenever possible, Field Educators attempt to capitalise on ‘prime time’ and deal with issues immediately – in informal supervision or debriefing. Whenever students seek or are offered their supervisor’s input, direction or expertise, it can be seen as informal supervision.

Field Educators, who have overall responsibility for the student’s placement and for the work the student does in the agency, may assign the student to Task Supervisors for some aspects of the work they do. Task Supervisors assume full responsibility for the student’s interaction with clients while they are with the students, and guide and direct the student’s work in the designated tasks.

In fact, we encourage Field Educators to arrange for their students to spend time observing or working with other agency staff. There are benefits all around. Sharing the responsibility for students with other agency staff gives the Field Educator time to attend to other duties. Working with staff other than their nominated Field Educators gives students broader opportunities to observe and compare different styles of work as they begin to develop their own. Students may have the opportunity to participate in group supervision with agency staff as well as individual supervision. Another benefit is that the Task Supervisor can work with students without having the full responsibility for them – often a way of testing the waters before undertaking greater responsibilities for providing Field Education.

We ask students to provide written and verbal accounts of their work for assessment, and to use their Field Education Learning Plan to monitor placement progress. The supervisory session is a time for students to reflect on practice, and for Field Educators to support, educate and advise on the tasks undertaken. At all times, constructive and mutual feedback should be encouraged.

## **Supervision requirements**

During the placement, the student must be supervised by a qualified Social Worker who:

- is eligible for membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW)
- has practised social work for a minimum of two years.

External Field Educator supervision may be arranged when a suitably qualified staff member is not available within the agency. This may only occur for one of the two placements and the agency must provide day-to-day task supervision for the student. See 'External supervision' below. Professional social work supervision needs to occur in a formal capacity for no less than one and a half hours per five full days of placement.

The supervisor is responsible for the quality of service to clients and for the educational guidance of the student.

## **External supervision**

Some excellent placement opportunities are found in human service agencies and other organisations where there are no qualified Social Workers available to supervise the student. If a placement is offered without a qualified Social Worker as Field Educator the University may approve that an Agency Task Supervisor be appointed, with an External Field Educator (Social Work supervisor) engaged to provide formal supervision.

It is important to remember that the Agency Task Supervisor has overall responsibility for the work the student does in the agency and for the day-to-day guidance of the student. The Agency Task Supervisor and External Field Educator should communicate regularly regarding student progress on the placement.

## **Training and support for Field Educators**

Depending on demand, sessions may be held at Deakin for Field Educators to cover issues around supervision, student learning, assessment and evaluation. Field Educators may also consult with Field Education Unit staff. Deakin also offers educators and practitioners regular opportunities to take part in seminars and training. These events will be advertised via email and post to agencies on the program database.

The Combined Schools of Social Work in Victoria offer introductory and advanced workshops for Field Educators. The schools rotate the responsibility for running these workshops, and each school contributes staff and resources. Field Educators can contact the university Field Education Unit staff for information on upcoming workshops.

### **Liaison visits**

Social Work staff (or a nominated University Liaison Person) will usually have a minimum of two contacts with the agency during the placement. The first visit, takes place around the third week (10th to 15th days) and the second takes place around the eighth week (35th to 40th days). Each meeting should take approximately one hour and the student, Field Educator, University Liaison Person and Agency Task Supervisor (if applicable) attend.

There are four major responsibilities that University Liaison Persons undertake (AASWWE, 1991):

- Monitoring and evaluating the student's performance;
- Educational consultation;
- Monitoring and evaluating the placement;
- Mediation and problem solving.

More contacts are possible if issues arise during the placement, and the student or the Field Educator request them. Students and Field Educators are also welcome to contact the University Liaison Person between visits for informal consultations by telephone.

Please see <<http://www.deakin.edu.au/hmnbs/hsd/fieldwork/socialwork/swdownloads.php>> (retrieved 10 December 2010) for a Liaison Visit Report template.

### **Student's role in supervision**

Students are expected to be active participants in the teaching and learning environment offered by field placement. Students will prepare materials for supervision and bring issues for discussion with their Field Educator. The learning journal will contribute to this process. It is the responsibility of students to notify their University Liaison Person or Field Education Unit staff if professional social work supervision is not held at the required rate (1½ hours per 5 placement days) or if there are other issues or concerns in relation to supervision.

Students are encouraged to be active in facilitating meeting times for liaison visits and should contact Field Education Unit staff if they are concerned about timely contact and/or do not have contact details for their University Liaison Person.

## Dealing with placement problems

### Introduction

Please read this section in conjunction with Appendix 4: 'What to do if a student is not performing to standard'.

It is expected that any difficulties students have in attaining their learning goals or working with agency staff will be identified early in the placement and dealt with in consultation with the University Liaison Person. If ongoing difficulties are identified at the mid-placement review, these must be discussed by the student, their Field Educator, Agency Task Supervisor (if applicable) and University Liaison Person. Strategies must be developed to ensure the student has an opportunity to address these issues prior to the final assessment. Corrective action should be undertaken through development of a work plan.

During placement, difficulties could arise because:

- the student and Field Educator have different expectations of work load and learning environment
- the student cannot cope with some placement tasks
- there is poor communication between student and Field Educator or Agency Task Supervisor
- the work allocated to the student is inadequate or insufficient
- the Field Educator changes during the placement
- the student is unhappy with the assessment of their work.

Many of these problems can be resolved through negotiation, and may be seen as an opportunity for students to practise negotiation skills. Similar problems arise in professional practice and the ability to work through them may mean the difference between a satisfactory workplace and a difficult one. As in the workplace, however, some problems are resistant to negotiation and may necessitate a termination of the placement.

If there are problems in the placement that cannot be resolved between Field Educator and student, the University Liaison Person should be contacted as soon as possible by either or both parties. With his or her input, a work plan to address the difficulties should be developed (with time lines) and monitored.

If the work plan is successful, the placement continues and the student is awarded a passing grade at the end of the placement. If the work plan is not successful, and a serious student difficulty cannot be surmounted, the placement can be terminated with a failing grade. See Appendix 4 for detailed procedural steps.

### *Interpersonal difficulties*

It is a fact of life that we find some people easier to work with than others (and they feel the same about us). The placement is an opportunity for students to learn how to develop good working relationships with colleagues who have different ideas about work styles, client relationships or even politics. Different backgrounds or just a

plain ‘personality clash’ can lead to misunderstandings in any workplace. Students are expected to behave in an appropriately professional manner when dealing with such difficulties.

Where possible, students are expected to sort out their difficulties directly with the person concerned – many workplace conflicts can be sorted out by clear, tactful communication and a dash of humour. Where such efforts fail to resolve interpersonal difficulties the student is expected to seek advice from an appropriate person, namely, their Field Educator, University Liaison Person or Field Education Unit staff at the University.

### *Personal difficulties*

Students who are experiencing personal difficulties that may affect their ability to carry out their placement should talk to their supervisor in the first instance so that the situation may be assessed. The University Liaison Person, and, if necessary, the Field Education Coordinator can be called upon to advise.

Field Education Unit staff at the University will have the final responsibility for deciding whether a placement should continue or be terminated.

Please note that students should not seek or allow personal counselling (relating to the difficulty itself, rather than its impact on the placement) from their Agency Task Supervisor or Field Educator. Personal counselling for students is offered through the Division of Student Life, <<http://www.deakin.edu.au/studentlife>> (retrieved 10 December 2010).

### **Steps for resolving difficulties**

No student should reach the end of the placement and be informed of a fail grade unless he or she was advised during the placement of a potential failure and offered the opportunity to develop a work plan.

- If either the student or the Field Educator feels that problems are arising from the student’s performance, or the student is having trouble meeting their learning and/or performance goals, the issue should initially be discussed between the student and Field Educator.
- If this does not lead to a resolution, the University Liaison Person should be consulted and a work plan to address the stated difficulties should be drawn up and monitored (please follow process as outlined in Appendix 4).
- If a mutually acceptable work plan cannot be agreed on, the Field Education Coordinator should participate.
- The work plan may be extended if needed, with the agreement of all parties
- All such meetings should be minuted and signed by all parties.
- If a mutually acceptable work plan cannot be agreed upon, or if the student does not carry out the work plan, or does not meet the standards proposed in the work plan, the University Liaison Person will consult with the Field Education Coordinator and the placement will be terminated.
- If the problems that resulted in the termination of the placement do not arise from the student’s performance, or if such problems do not, in the University Liaison Person’s judgement, constitute grounds for failure as the student

diligently attended and participated in their placement in good faith, credit for work done will be considered if the orientation phase (first two weeks) has been completed. There is, however, a limit to the amount of credit which can be granted: the subsequent placement must be at least ten weeks long.

- If the termination of the placement is due, in the opinion of the University Liaison Person and Field Education Coordinator, to the student's lack of diligence or another performance issue, then the student will be awarded a fail grade.

Issues of personality 'clash' are unlikely to lead to a failure as failure relates to an inability to set and/or meet goals in keeping with the AASW Standards for Practice. Should a student's behaviour be unprofessional in any way (for example, negligent, dishonest or aggressive) as a result of any conflict or personality clash however, then it is most likely to lead to a fail result.

### **Field Education review panel**

At this point, if the student does not agree with the fail grade, they must e-mail the Field Education Coordinator who will convene a Social Work Field Education Review Panel. The Panel, consisting of two social work academics (who were not involved in the student's placement) and an independent representative from the field, will review the decision to fail, based on written statements from the Field Educator, University Liaison Person, and the student. This process is likely to involve telephone consultation with all parties, including the Field Education Coordinator, to clarify or seek further information as necessary.

### **What happens after a student fails a placement?**

There are two further avenues of redress should students receive a fail grade from the Social Work Field Education Panel Review. These are the Review of result process and 'show cause': These are outlined below:

- 1 All students whether involved in course work units or placement and who fail units have the opportunity to apply to the faculty for a review of results (within 5 days of results being released). This process is usually an administrative process where the Faculty Academic Progress and Discipline Committee (FAPDC) checks that all due process for assessment has been followed (e.g. second marking on a clean copy of assignments that fail for example). The online process can be accessed on the Current Students section of the HMNBS website, under FAPDC <<http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/current-students/fapdc.php>> (retrieved 10 December 2010)
- 2 A second process involving the Course Coordinator, School Academic Progress Committee (APC) and the Faculty Academic Progress and Discipline Committee is when the results of students over two active semesters are reviewed BEFORE the results of the current trimester are released to students. This process identifies any students who have failed (passes fewer than fails or passes equal fails) or other breaches of academic rules over two active semesters. Some of these decisions may involve asking students to show cause to a meeting convened by the School APC Chair and representatives of the courses involved such as Course Coordinators as to why they should not be

excluded from the course. Students who fail placements (worth 4 credit points) attract an automatic exclusion as the rule being breached is pass < fail or pass = fail over two active semesters. These students would therefore get a letter asking them to attend a meeting and/or write a statement explaining why they should not be excluded. Students are able to bring a support person or advocate to this meeting, and DUSA are often able to assist.

### **Bullying and harassment**

During the first week of placement, students must make sure to read and understand the placement agency's definitions, policy and procedure on bullying and harassment as part of the Safety Audit (see Appendix 2).

Sexual harassment includes any conduct which causes distress to a person because it carries sexual implications, constitutes a sexual advance, seeks sexual favours, or carries a threat in the absence of a favourable response. It can involve a variety of behaviours from verbal suggestion to overt demands to stalking and physical abuse. It can occur between peers, colleagues or within a supervisory relationship, and in same-sex as well as heterosexual interactions. Harassment can occur between clients in the agency setting or between a client and an agency employee. Either party may be the perpetrator and in every case this needs to be reported to the agency and the agency must take steps to address the issue.

Students experiencing difficulty in regard to any form of bullying or harassment should take the matter up immediately with their Field Educator, University Liaison Person or a Field Education Unit staff member.

### **Withdrawal from a placement**

It may be possible for a student to withdraw without failure from field education units up to one month after beginning placement. However, a student may not simply 'quit' from a placement without first discussing the matter with the Field Educator and Field Education Unit staff. This is because the student's reasons for withdrawal need to be discussed in order to assess subsequent academic action that is appropriate to the circumstances.

#### ***Withdrawal from a placement for reasons other than those stated above***

Students may be withdrawn from placement without failure if the conditions which support a student placement have changed. This may include but not be limited to issues such as resourcing, workload, sickness affecting the Field Educator or student, or the student not disclosing a prior involvement with the agency. Students may be immediately withdrawn from placement, or the agency may request termination of placement, or the student may be failed for the following reasons:

- prior to placement, the student did not disclose information that would have an impact on their performance in placement– e.g. that the student had failed an earlier placement, that the student has a diagnosed condition or disability that will affect their work performance, or that the student has a criminal conviction(s) which makes their placement at certain agencies unviable – for example sexual offences or other offences against the person, or dishonesty offences in placement where allocation of funds are involved

- failure of duty of care
- unsatisfactory performance – for example unprofessional behaviour (i.e.) ongoing tardiness, and lack of commitment to the placement or ongoing disrespectful or otherwise inappropriate behaviour, lack of progress in formulating and meeting goals in relation to the AASW practice standards
- unethical behaviour (breaching the AASW Code of Ethics)
- misconduct – for example dishonesty, violence or other aggressive behaviour
- negligence.

Should any of these situations occur; the Field Education Coordinator will consult with academic colleagues and make a decision as to whether to apply a fail grade, or require the student to repeat the placement at an alternative agency. The decision will be made based on the seriousness of the issue, and the effect or likely effect on service users, colleagues or the agency in which the student is placed. Should the student disagree with the decision, they must e-mail the Field Education Coordinator who will organise to have the decision reviewed by the Social Work Field Education Review Panel consisting of two social work academics and an independent representative from the field, who will review the decision to fail or repeat based on statements from the Field Educator, University Liaison Person and the student. This process is likely to involve telephone consultation with all parties including the Field Education Coordinator, to clarify or seek further information.

# Learning and assessment

## Introduction

The student, the Field Educator and the University (through the University Liaison Person) share in the process of assessment.

Assessment in placement is continuous and is centred on learning that addresses the AASW Practice standards for Social Workers. Field Educators and students develop a Field Education Placement Contract and Field Education Learning Plan in consultation with the University Liaison Person. During supervision, the student and Field Educator monitor the learning process. Opportunities and obstacles to learning need to be identified early on in the placement.

The practice standards on which the student will be evaluated are linked to the Field Education Learning Plan. The University Liaison Person reviews the Field Education Learning Plan and assessment schedule which the Field Educator and student have worked through at mid-placement. There should be no surprises at the end of the placement for the student, Field Educator or University Liaison Person.

If there are problems in the placement, all parties should refer to the procedures outlined in 'Dealing with placement problems' on pages 27–31 and the accompanying Appendix 4. These procedures describe how a work plan can be drawn up and monitored, with the aim of getting the student and placement on track for successful completion.

If this procedure is followed, it is unlikely that there would be disagreement between the University Liaison Person and the Field Educator over a recommended grade. However, the Unit Chair has final responsibility to assign grades.

## *Responsibility for learning*

Students are to be self-directed learners, and this includes taking the initiative to ensure difficulties do not escalate.

Part of a student's strategy for dealing with difficulties should include consulting with their Field Educator or the Field Education Unit staff, or bringing an issue related to academic issues or social work practice to an integration seminar.

## Grading

Field Education is awarded academic credit (equivalent to an entire trimester of academic work) towards a University award. All universities have appeal procedures for grade determination.

HSW314 and HSW415 are assessed as 'ungraded pass' or 'fail' only. Students do not receive a grade such as credit or distinction. However, the evaluation provided by the Field Educator in the two assessment reports will provide valuable feedback.

## Assessment requirements

In order to receive a final assessment for this unit, students must have completed all of the following:

Assessment item	Due date	Submit to
70 days of placement in the designated placement agency		
Field Education Placement Contract – an agreement between the student, Field Educator and the University	Prior to Placement beginning	Field Education Unit
Safety Audit	Day 20 (or earlier)	Field Education Unit
Field Education Learning Plan – an outline of the student’s learning objectives, how they plan to meet them, and how they relate to AASW Practice Standards	Day 20 (or earlier)	Field Education Unit, and copy to University Liaison Person
Three integration seminars on campus <i>or</i> weekly discussions on DSO	Details are advised on DSO prior to commencement of the trimester	
Mid-placement Review Report – a report jointly written by the student and the Field Educator at mid-placement	Day 40	Field Education Unit, and copy to University Liaison Person
Critical Incident Report – a report written by the student	Day 45	See Appendix 5
Final Assessment Report – a report jointly written by the student and the Field Educator at the end of the placement, with a <i>recommendation</i> by the Field Educator of ‘pass’ or ‘fail’	Day 65	Field Education Unit, and copy to University Liaison Person

The student, Field Educator and Field Education Unit staff should keep copies of each assessment document. The Unit Chair for HSW314/415 cannot lodge a final grade for the placement until all assessment documents have been received at the University.

### *Field Education Learning Journal*

From Week 1, students are asked to make regular entries in a journal, in order to record and reflect upon tasks completed, events, integration of theory with practice, and personal insights gained throughout the course of the placement. The content of the learning journal will form the basis for discussion in field supervision, and the Field Educator can request to read it.

### *Field Education Placement Contract*

The Field Education Placement Contract is to be completed by the student, Field Educator and Agency Task Supervisor (if applicable) prior to the student beginning placement and then forwarded to the Field Education Unit for HSW314/331/415.

The contract sets out the professional expectations of all parties from the beginning of the placement. Some student and Field Educator expectations are not negotiable, and they have been provided within the contract template (see Appendix 1).

### *Field Education Learning Plan*

The completed Field Education Learning Plan is to be submitted by Day 20 of the placement (or after the first liaison visit). The Field Education Learning Plan is drawn up jointly by the student and their Field Educator. It sets out the student's learning goals, tasks and methods of evaluating the work for the placement. The learning goals in the plan need to focus on the domains specified in the AASW Practice Standards.

The Field Education Learning Plan is to be completed, ensuring that the University Liaison Person receives the plan prior to the first visit. It is then signed off by the University Liaison Person and submitted by the student to the Field Education Unit. A proforma of the education plan is available on the Deakin Social Work Field Education web site so you can type into it.

The plan becomes the blueprint from which all placement activities flow to guide purposeful student learning. It clearly sets out agreements on goals, tasks, assessment criteria, and competencies to be demonstrated and therefore provides a basis for negotiation if problems arise in relation to the student's progress or expectations.

The Field Education Learning Plan is an important document which formalises the placement process, and assists in monitoring the student's progress and assessment. It should be a major tool in the supervisory process. The most important aspect in drawing up your plan is to be very clear and specific about the goals and tasks and what evidence will be collected to demonstrate learning. (See Appendix 3 and web site for template.)

### *Integration seminars and DSO discussions*

On-campus students are required to participate in three, day-long integration seminars during the field placement. All students are encouraged to attend if possible in order to engage in peer networking and support. Students will be advised of the dates for the integration seminars on DSO prior to the commencement of each trimester.

Off-campus students who do not attend seminars will participate in weekly DSO discussions.

### *Mid-placement Review report*

Halfway through the placement, (35th–40th day), the student and their Field Educator jointly undertake a major review of the placement to determine progress, strengths and areas for development. This is the time for any areas of concern to be identified, so plans can be made to deal with them. The Field Education Learning Plan includes a section for the mid placement review. The updated Field Education Learning Plan with the completed mid placement review should then be submitted to the Field Education Unit by day 40.

### *Critical incident report*

Students are asked to complete a Critical Incident Report and submit this to the Field Education Unit on or before day 45 of the placement. See Appendix 5 for report-writing instructions.

### *Final Assessment Report*

In the second last week of placement (60th–65th days), the student and Field Educator complete the Final Assessment Report. It is suggested that the report is first drafted by the student and then discussed with the Field Educator. The Field Educator then prepares the final version for submission, and both sign it. It is an important document, because it forms the basis for the assessment of the student's performance during placement, and provides feedback to the student. If there has been more than one Field Educator involved, or an Agency Task Supervisor and Field Educator, then they too should participate in preparing the final report.

It is expected that students will self-evaluate and identify areas for further learning, as well as highlight learning achieved. For students on their first placement, this report is the first official assessment of their initial attempt to practise social work in the field. Therefore, the Field Educator needs to be honest, fair and constructive in identifying strengths and areas for further development. For the first placement, we ask the Field Educator and student to identify areas for further learning and development in the second and final placement.

It is the responsibility of the Field Educator to make a recommendation of 'pass' or 'fail' in the report. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that a copy of the signed Final Assessment Report is sent to the University Liaison Person; and the original is posted to the Field Education Unit. The student should ensure that they keep a copy of the report for their own records.

We suggest that the student use the assessment from their second placement as a basis for career planning. Field Educators can perform a valuable mentoring role in this context, identifying not only the strengths and competence of the student, but also the kinds of opportunities now available for the student, or suggested directions in which the student might look for work.

### **Expected performance levels**

By the end of their first placement, the student is expected to be able to demonstrate a beginning level of skill and knowledge associated with the AASW Practice Standards. If any of the standards are not applicable to a particular agency in the first placement, this should be noted in the Final Assessment report. The Field Education Unit staff will then make sure that the student gets the opportunity to address those areas in the second placement.

By the end of their second placement, the student is expected to demonstrate mastery of the Practice Standards to the same level as that expected of a graduate Social Worker in the placement agency.

The way the standards are demonstrated will vary according to the work situation and the individual student, so an assessment should identify strengths and areas for further learning as well as minimum overall standards of competent practice for the specific placement work undertaken.

### **Evidence of competence**

Students are required to detail in their Field Education Learning Plan the types of evidence they will provide to demonstrate that they have achieved their learning goals (see Appendix 3).

Evidence of meeting learning objectives may be provided using examples such as reports, process recordings, journals, summaries of readings, case notes or videos. Students should include these items when preparing the first draft of their assessment reports.

### **Procedures for the early identification of problems**

If, at any time during the placement, the student or their Field Educator feels that the student is at risk of failing to meet the placement objectives, such concerns should be communicated promptly to the University Liaison Person. This could be done at a planned liaison visit, or at a meeting called especially to discuss the problem. All three parties should attempt to identify the factors contributing to the failure, and decide whether corrective action can be undertaken through a work plan. All parties should refer to the procedures outlined in 'Dealing with placement problems' and the accompanying Appendix 4.

# International placements

## Introduction

Students will operate within the AASW code of ethics as well as the code of ethics for the country where they plan to undertake their placement. The international standards for social work practice can be accessed at the International Federation of Social Workers website, <<http://www.ifsw.org>> (retrieved 13 December 2010).

Deakin students who wish to undertake their placement overseas will be required to submit a written request which will be followed by an interview.

Exchange or study abroad students from overseas universities will enrol in HSW331 *Practicum in Health and Social Development*. Field Education Unit staff will seek placements that meet the requirement of the unit.

## Domestic students seeking a placement outside Australia

Domestic students interested in undertaking a placement overseas need to begin initial preparation up to two years in advance.

### *Preparing for the placement*

Students must ensure that the international placement agreement form has been completed prior to their departure. If there are any changes, the Field Education Unit should be advised immediately.

Students should make every effort to learn about the country and the agency where placement is being offered prior to leaving Australia. It is also important for students to identify the potential challenges and barriers to learning they could encounter – for example, differences in transport, email and internet access, dress code and language.

Students should be conversant with the assessment requirements and ensure that they have their field education manual in hard copy or electronic form, or are able to access it online.

## HSW314 first placement students

Students enrolled in HSW314 are eligible to access an exchange through Deakin International Education Abroad program.

It is the responsibility of the student to meet the requirements of Deakin International, including the early application schedule. Students on exchange will enrol in a field education unit at one of Deakin's partner universities. Possible destination universities are listed on the Education Abroad website:

<<http://www.deakin.edu.au/future-students/student-exchange/exchange/>> (retrieved 13 December 2010).

Deakin International Study Abroad provides information and resources to students planning an international placement including pre departure information sessions and pre departure checklists and forms. Study abroad liaise directly with host universities, and will be involved in application and acceptance processes. Students are advised not to purchase flights until they have received their offer of acceptance paperwork from the host university.

### *Academic requirements*

During an exchange program students will be withdrawn from Deakin units and will have all their assessment completed at the host university.

### **HSW415 final placement students**

Unfortunately final year students are not eligible for exchange through Deakin International unless they will be returning to complete a subsequent final unit at Deakin. As duty of care issues arise if no host university is involved via Deakin International we seek International placement offers for final year students via a small number of International partner programs. These are the options available for students considering an International placement in final year.

### *Academic requirements*

Students will complete all HSW415 assessment requirements in order to achieve a pass (ungraded). Students are responsible for ensuring they take a hard copy package, including the field education manual and all relevant paperwork with them. Ideally students will have access to a computer to make the required contributions to DSO discussions and in order to email documentation to the Field Education Coordinator. In the event that students may not have computer access they need to anticipate alternative ways to communicate their completion to Field Education Unit staff. Students will not be eligible to receive a pass until the Field Education Coordinator has signed off on every requirement.

### **Other important details for both HSW314 and HSW415**

Students will need to find out what the police clearance requirements are in the country where placements is being sought. They may also need to obtain an international drivers licence.

### *Travel and accommodation*

Students should apply for a suitable visa (in most instances this will be a tourist visa). Students should finalise their itinerary and book their ticket in consultation with the host University, Field Education Unit staff, the agency and their Field Educator. As noted earlier, do not purchase flights until you have received acceptance documentation from the host university.

Students will bear all travel costs, including airfares and transport to and from the host agency. Where necessary, students should also book transit accommodation and onward train or bus journeys prior to departure.

Students will receive help in finding accommodation from the host university but will bear all accommodation and living costs while on placement. In limited circumstances students may have access to Deakin overseas travel grants. The commonwealth government may provide a loan for education overseas.

### *Insurance and health*

Students must organise necessary vaccinations and preventative medical treatments well before they travel. Health information is available from travel agents, embassies and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade web site <[www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)> (retrieved 13 December 2010). Pre-travel medical and dental checkups are recommended.

Travel and health insurance is also essential prior to going on any overseas travel. This can be organized through a travel agent or by shopping around online.

### **International students seeking a placement in Australia**

International students are enrolled in HSW331 *Practicum in Health and Social Development*, as exchange or study abroad students through Deakin International.

The home university will need to assist students to complete the required forms for their Deakin application. The Field Education Coordinator at Deakin is advised of those students at the time of enrolment, by staff at Deakin International, as lead time is required to source placements.

Overseas students attending placement in Australia will need to:

- complete a student profile form and forward it, along with a copy of their résumé, to the Field Education Coordinator at the time of enrolment
- obtain a police check from their home country
- fulfil Australian government regulations by purchasing overseas student health cover before applying for an Australian visa
- contact the Field Education Coordinator immediately upon arrival in Geelong so that initial interviews with agencies can be arranged as soon as possible.

International students will be based at the Geelong Waterfront Campus, and will be placed with local agencies.

# Glossary

<b>AASW</b>	The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) is the only national organisation of qualified Social Workers. As such, it defines the standards required for eligibility for membership, and sets the guidelines for Australian social work courses whose graduates can automatically be admitted to full membership. There is a local branch in each state and territory. The web address for the national association is < <a href="http://www.aasw.asn.au">http://www.aasw.asn.au</a> > (retrieved 13 December 2010).
<b>AASWWE</b>	The Australian Association of Social Work and Welfare Education (AASWWE) focuses on enhancing social work and welfare education within Australia by conducting conferences, and publishing newsletters and policy papers. The web address for this association is < <a href="http://www.aaswwe.asn.au">http://www.aaswwe.asn.au</a> > (retrieved 13 December 2010).
<b>Agency</b>	In this manual, ‘the agency’ means the human service organisation (or branch or department of that organisation) that is offering field placements to students.
<b>Agency Task Supervisor</b>	This is a worker with different qualifications other than Social Worker who will oversee the day-to-day running of the placement in the agency, allocate work, offer a professional perspective or advice as needed and provide day-to-day guidance.
<b>Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)</b>	At Deakin University, the BSW is a four-year, full-time degree offered by the Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Sciences through the School of Health and Social Development. The BSW prepares students to practise as professional Social Workers on graduation, and qualifies them to apply for membership of the AASW.
<b>External Field Educator</b>	If a suitable placement is offered at an agency that does not employ a qualified Social Worker, the University can appoint a Field Educator from outside the agency. This External Field Educator will carry out formal supervision and assessment during the placement, and will keep in regular contact with the student and his or her Agency Task Supervisor.
<b>Field Education Consultative Committee (FECC)</b>	This committee, consisting of Field Education Unit staff and interested practitioners from the field, meets every two months. The Field Education Coordinator is the convenor. It provides a forum for collaboration and consultation between the Deakin social work program and the human service industry.
<b>Field Education</b>	To underline the fact that the full-time, trimester-long university units HSW314 or HSW415 are an educational exercise, we have called this component of the course Field Education. The two placements consist of 70 days practical work each, done under the supervision of a qualified social work Field Educator in an approved agency or organisation. The field education component of the course is organised by the Field Education Unit staff. Outside of Deakin, this kind of practical social work experience may be called field experience, a field placement or a practicum.

<b>Field Education review committee</b>	Disputed decisions or problematic issues arising from Field Education which are not covered by the University's policies and procedures may be referred to this committee for consideration. The committee comprises representatives from Social Work academic staff, Field Educators and students.
<b>On-site Field Educator</b>	This term refers to Social Workers in the agencies who have the specific responsibility for planning, guiding and evaluating the learning of students on placement as Field Educators in recognition of their educational role and skills. As a minimum, a Field Educator must have graduated from a course that makes them eligible for AASW membership, and have two years of practical experience post-qualification.  Other titles frequently used in the literature for this role are student supervisor, field instructor and practicum instructor.
<b>Placements and supervision</b>	The actual work assignment of a social work student to an agency is traditionally referred to as a placement, just as the responsible guidance of the student by the Field Educator is traditionally referred to as supervision.
<b>School of Health and Social Development</b>	The school in the Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Sciences at Deakin University that has administrative responsibility for Social Work.
<b>University Liaison Person</b>	The academic staff member in Social Work who is responsible for visits to individual students whilst on placement is called the University Liaison Person. Students and Field Educators may contact him or her via the University.  For off-campus students who have placements at a distance from Geelong, we usually engage a social work academic from a nearby university or a suitable experienced Social Worker in the local area to act as a University Liaison Person. This person then reports back to the Field Education Coordinator.

# Bibliography

## References

- Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) 2010, *Code of Ethics*, AASW, Canberra.
- Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) 2008, *Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards*, AASW, Canberra.
- Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) 2003, *Practice standards for social workers: achieving outcomes*, AASW, Canberra.

## Recommended further reading

- Beddoe, L & Maidment, J 2009, *Mapping knowledge for social work practice: critical intersections*, Cengage Learning, South Melbourne.
- Cleak, H & Wilson, J 2007, *Making the most of field placement*, Thomson Learning, Southbank, Vic.
- Cooper, L & Briggs, L (eds) 2000, *Fieldwork in the human services*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW.
- Maidment, J & Egan, R (eds) 2009, *Practice skills in social work and welfare: more than just common sense*, 2nd edn, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW.
- Pugh, R & Cheers, B 2010, *Rural social work: An international perspective*, The Policy Press, Bristol



# Appendices

**Appendix 1:** Field Education Placement Contract

**Appendix 2:** Safety Audit

**Appendix 3:** Field Education Learning Plan, Mid Placement Review and Final Assessment Report

**Appendix 4:** What to do if a student is not performing to standard

**Appendix 5:** Critical Incident Report

**Appendix 6:** Social Work at Deakin



## Appendix 1: Field Education Placement Contract

**Deakin University**  
**BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION 2011**



The completion of this contract is to be coordinated by the student. This contract must be completed and returned to the University by the student for approval and confirmation one week before placement may begin. This is required for relevant action (e.g. liaison) and to satisfy Deakin insurance conditions.

Note: Please advise Norah Hosken at [norah.hosken@deakin.edu.au](mailto:norah.hosken@deakin.edu.au) or (03) 5227 8435 as soon as possible of any changes of postal/email addresses, phone numbers, or dates.

Student Details	
Student name:	_____
BSW:	<input type="checkbox"/> HSW313/314 <input type="checkbox"/> HSW415
Address: Street Name	_____
Suburb	_____
Post Code/State	_____
Contact Number: Home	_____ Mobile _____
Email address:	_____

Agency Details	
Agency:	_____
Address: Street Name	_____
Suburb	_____
Post Code/State	_____
Address for Correspondence: Street Name/PO Box	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> As Above	Suburb _____
	Post Code/State _____
Field Educator/s: (On-Site Qualified Social Worker)	_____
Contact details: Phone	_____ Fax _____
Email address:	_____
Agency Task Supervisor:	_____
(Only applies if there is no qualified on-site Social Worker)	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Contact details: Phone	_____ Fax _____
Email address:	_____

**Placement Dates and Hours**

Anticipated Commencement Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Days of Placement (Please Circle): Mon    Tues    Wed    Thurs    Fri    Sat    Sun

Please indicate any periods you plan to be on leave from placement: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate any plans for 'off-site' placement activities which involve participation in programs away from the above agency (e.g. conference, camp): \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Placement Details**

1 Main Aims/Tasks of the Potential Placement

2 What are your anticipated Learning Goals?

3 Potential Strengths of the Learning Situation

4 Potential Difficulties of the Learning Situation

5 Nature of Supervision Provided

6 What plans are there to orient you to the Agency?





<b>Supervision Arrangements</b>	
<b>On-Site Supervision:</b> If the supervision is being provided on site, who be providing qualified Social Work supervision?	
Name:	_____
How often will supervision session be held?	_____
What will the approx. length of sessions be?	_____
<b>Off-Site Supervision:</b> Please tick if Deakin has indicated it will organize off-site Social Work supervision? (ie. The agency cannot provide on-site supervision) <input type="checkbox"/>	
Who may be assisting with supervision? (E.g. Agency Task supervisor, back up supervisor, other staff member)	_____
How often will supervision session be held?	_____
What will the approximate length of sessions be?	_____

**Negotiating Modifications to Contract**

Notwithstanding the above agreement, it is recognised that circumstances may create the need for change, by agreement between student, supervisor and Deakin University. Please advise Norah Hosken at norah.hosken@deakin.edu.au or (03) 5227 8435 as soon as possible of any changes.

<b>Placement Contract Signatories</b>	
Student Signature: _____	Date: _____
Field Educator/Supervisor Signature: _____	Date: _____
Field Education Coordinator Signature: _____	Date: _____
<i>NB. For this agreement to be recognised by Deakin University, it must be signed by all parties.</i>	

**Student to note:** One week prior to commencing placement, the student must deliver completed form to:

Social Work Field Education Unit  
 School of Health & Social Development  
 Geelong Waterfront Campus  
 Geelong Vic 3217 Australia  
 Email: norah.hosken@deakin.edu.au  
 Fax: (03) 5227 8356

<b>Deakin to Complete</b>	
University Liaison Person:	_____
Agency Task Supervisor :	_____
On-site Field Educator:	_____
Off-site Field Educator (if applicable):	_____



## Appendix 2: Safety Audit

**Deakin University**  
**BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION 2011**



### Agency risk reduction guidelines

Field Education Unit staff recognise that human service agencies are under pressure. Budget cuts and reduced services have led to more clients with critical needs and histories of negative involvement with social services. In this climate, Social Workers may find themselves in risky and threatening work situations and some have been harmed.

Students in training cannot be insulated from the realities of professional life, nor should they, if fieldwork is to continue to be a real learning situation. On the other hand, students lack the experience and skills that help seasoned practitioners to assess danger and take appropriate precautions. Field Education Unit staff take responsibility for providing classroom content on safety issues and preparing students to handle potentially dangerous situations. However, we would be remiss were we not to require that a serious effort be made to reduce risk in field settings.

The following guidelines may be modified with the explicit approval of the agency Field Educator and the Field Education Coordinator. We recognise that the implementation of these guidelines may take some time. The Field Education Coordinator may determine that while an agency is not currently meeting all guidelines it is making a good effort to do so and current arrangements are sufficient to proceed with a field placement.

- 1 A fieldwork agency should have policies and procedures covering:
  - building and office security
  - emergency procedures, including when and how to summon security or police
  - staff responsibilities and procedures for managing violent clients
  - safety on home visits, including when, where and under what conditions visits should or should not be made, when the student should be accompanied and how back-up is provided (see below).
  
- 2 The Agency should provide the student with a copy of these safety policies and suitable training during the student orientation.
  
- 3 Assignment of the following types of activities should be discussed with the University Liaison person prior to assignment:
  - physically restraining clients
  - transporting a client in the student's private car
  - transporting a client with a recent history of violent behaviour
  - treating a client with a history of violence toward staff
  - working in the agency when other staff are not present.
  
- 4 The student's Field Educator or Agency Task Supervisor should know (or be able to easily ascertain) the student's location during fieldwork hours and should discuss with him or her any activities that require special planning with regard to safety.

## Safety Audit

These are questions for students to follow up during their orientation phase. After discussion in supervision, the Field Educator should sign the completed form, and it should be submitted with the Field Education Learning Plan.

The safety policies are made explicit to students and workers by:


Safety measures for transporting clients could be (or are):


Skills that staff and students need to develop to deal with potentially threatening situations are:


Safety measures for conducting home visits could be (or are):
Safety measures for working with a client who has a history of violence are:
When seeing clients or facilitating groups after hours, measures to ensure safety are:

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Field Educator Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Student to note:** Safety Audit to be submitted with Field Education Learning Plan by Day 20, to:

Social Work Field Education Unit  
School of Health & Social Development  
Geelong Waterfront Campus  
Geelong Vic 3217 Australia  
Email: [norah.hosken@deakin.edu.au](mailto:norah.hosken@deakin.edu.au)  
Fax: (03) 5227 8356



## Appendix 3: Field Education Learning Plan, Mid Placement Review and Final Assessment Report

**Deakin University**  
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### Overview of use

- Students should, together with their Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor develop a Field Education Learning Plan that identifies the students key learning goals for placement, and the tasks and ways to measure performance against each of the 7 broad learning areas. The Field Education Learning Plan will not list all tasks undertaken by the student on placement however it is important to use the plan to identify specific tasks that student will undertake to demonstrate their achievements against the core learning areas.
- While some learning areas will be more directly relevant to some placements than others student are required to develop tasks for all 7 areas, relevant to placement focus (eg in a direct service placement student may only identify 1–2 tasks related to learning areas 6 and 7).
- The Field Education Learning Plan is a working document and students and Field Educators should refer to it throughout placement to assess progress and identify any additional learning needs.
- Please attach additional pages for comments if needed.
- A draft of this plan should be developed by week 2–3 and made available to the University Liaison Person prior to their first visit.
- A mid placement review should occur to identify progress and/or areas in need of improvement/greater focus for the second half of the placement.

A **rating scale** that identifies level of achievement against each of the 7 core learning areas is to be used to assist students and field educators to assess the level of the student’s performance. This scale is designed for the purpose of indicating minimum standards expected for Field Education 1 and 2. It is holistic in nature, providing a broad rating against each of the core learning areas.

The scale is as follows:

Level	Rating	Descriptors
Level 1	Not Capable	Performance not at basic level expected. Poor understanding of requirements. Practice unsafe or inappropriate. Knowledge or skills undeveloped. Little application to learning.
Level 2	Beginning Capability	Performance at beginning level expected. Requirements understood. Practice capable under close guidance and supervision. Limited adaptability.
Level 3	Capable	Performance at level expected of newly qualifying practitioner. Requirements integrated into practice. Can perform independently. Demonstrates adaptability and critical appreciation of own/others’ practice.
Level 4	Highly Capable	Performance beyond level expected of newly qualifying practitioner. High levels of independence. Engages strongly in critical reflexivity. Exhibits ethical fluency. Generates new understandings or practices.

To pass HSW314 Field Education A (first placement), students must at least reach a level of beginning capability for all 7 areas, appropriate to the setting by the end of the placement.

To pass HSW415 Field Education B (final placement) students must at least reach a level of capable across all 7 areas, relevant to placement setting, by the end of the placement.

Students undertaking a rural focus placement are required to have three separate goals focussed on rural issues and rural communities.

## Explanatory notes:

### ASSESSMENT

In agreeing to provide a student placement, the Supervisor/s agree/s to undertake assessment of the student's abilities and provide feedback to the student via supervision and in writing through the Placement Assessment Report. This can be a difficult and complex task, but is critical to the student's learning process and is a University requirement for academic study.

The Placement Assessment Report has been constructed around the AASW Practice Standards with the expectation that all students will graduate with a beginning practitioner level of competency in these key areas as is required by the AASW.

The Assessment document incorporates three key functions: (i) Firstly to define placement *Learning Goals and Learning Tasks* that outline placement specific learning goals and associated selected tasks/activities at the commencement of placement; (ii) Secondly to provide a framework for reporting back on the student's progress towards meeting their learning goals at mid-placement; and (iii) Thirdly, to provide a framework for the final assessment report on the student placement achievements at the completion of placement.

It is intended that the document will be incrementally completed and submitted at these 3 stages resulting in a comprehensive assessment document for submission at the end of placement.

Students should achieve (and demonstrate) basic competency in *all* seven learning areas over the course of the first and final placements.

The selection of learning tasks for each of the seven *Learning Areas* should occur as a joint activity between the student and their Supervisor/s within the first two or three weeks of placement. These should be written into the document within the appropriate sections (i.e. within the beginning summary sections, and at the end of each of the sections within the document).

The *Learning Plan Task Suggestion Menu* (see below) provide suggestions only and should be adapted to the students individual placement circumstances. All Learning Tasks must relate to the specific learning opportunities within the placement, be meaningful and measurable. It must be clear how you will demonstrate an outcome from the task and how this will relate to your broader learning outcomes. While some of the 7 broader learning areas may be more applicable to particular placement contexts, students are required to list at least one task (or possibly two if desired) for all 7 goals. Students may need to think more broadly about the various types of associated learning and how this can be demonstrated.

The *Learning Tasks* will form part of the focus of discussion at the Liaison Visit. The liaison staff member will provide feedback on the chosen *Learning Tasks* and discuss the processes planned for achieving these.

A mid-placement review is to be undertaken between the student and Supervisor/s around week 5 or 6 to assess initial student progress. The student will critically reflect on their progress and undertake an initial completion of the Mid Placement Review part of the document rating themselves on each of the Learning Areas. The field educator and task supervisor (if any) should then also include their rating. This may be done in conjunction with the student, or separately and compared with the student in supervision. It is intended that the discussion of these assessments/ratings will facilitate the learning process for the student and is a critical element of the learning process. The critical importance of the interactive discursive component should not be underestimated and the assessment document is intended to provide a structured framework for ongoing self-assessment. *[NB: If the item is not applicable, please use the N/A code and if it is unable to be assessed at this time, use the U/A code].*

The *Final Assessment Report* is undertaken by a similar process between the student and Supervisor/s within the final weeks of placement. It is expected that students will self-evaluate and identify areas for further learning, as well as highlight learning achieved. In the final placement we suggest that students use the assessment as a basis for career planning.

A *Liaison Completion Report* is submitted by the University Liaison Person as part of the Final Placement Assessment Report in which they make a recommendation of Pass or Fail, which is then submitted to the University. The final responsibility for allocating grades resides with the University.

Should a student disagree with the assessment, they may follow the same appeals procedure that applies to academic units.

### **EVIDENCE OF COMPETENCE**

We require students to include in their assessment documentation the types of evidence they will provide to demonstrate that they have achieved or attempted in order to achieve their learning goals and ultimately, the Field Education Placement subject objectives. The tasks menu provides some examples of tasks and their outcomes that can be adapted to the particular placement. Tasks selected should be of sufficient challenge to extend the student's learning, and the outcome/evidence of completion should be assessed by the field educator and task supervisor (if any) as part of the supervisory role.

The way the competencies are demonstrated may vary according to the work situation and the individual student, so an assessment should identify strengths and areas for further learning, as well as minimum overall standards of competent practice for the specific placement undertaken.

Within the first placement, students are expected to demonstrate beginning skills in undertaking a range of social work tasks across the seven different learning areas. It is expected that students will require support to achieve their learning goals and they are not required at this stage to demonstrate significant independence within their practice. The general standard of assessment for a First Placement is that the student has made reasonable attempts to develop the relevant skill or knowledge and has demonstrated a beginning capacity to meet the identified criteria.

Examples of activities commonly attempted in first placements include: engagement with clients; undertaking a basic psychosocial assessment; developing a basic intervention plan; develop an understanding of appropriate social work roles; develop an understanding of how an organisation functions.

Within the final year placement the learning is aimed at assisting students to transition to a professional role and consolidate their professional identity. Graduate skills include the ability to function with a critical understanding of their professional role as a social worker and what it means to practice in a socially diverse community. Within the final placement, professional competencies will continue to be developed across the seven key learning areas but will be assessed against a higher standard appropriate for a *beginning practitioner*. Within the latter stages of the final placement, a student would be expected to manage a caseload/ workload equivalent to 0.5 EFT of a base grade social worker in that organisation. The AASW mandates that the standard against which Final Year students will be assessed is that of a beginning practitioner.

Examples of additional activities commonly undertaken in final placements include: development of multi-dimensional intervention plans; implementation of these intervention plans; undertake critical reflection on their practice; develop team work skills.

If the Supervisor/s or student has concerns about this process, they should discuss this with the liaison staff member.

## Task Menu for suggested *Learning Tasks*

The *Task Menus* provide **suggestions only** and should be adapted to individual placement circumstances. Students are encouraged to include their own (measurable) learning tasks within the Field Education Learning Plan. While some of the 7 broader learning areas may be more applicable to particular placement contexts, students are strongly encouraged to list at least one or two tasks for all 7 learning areas. You may need to think more broadly about the various types of associated learning and how this can be demonstrated.

### Tasks Menu suggestions for First Placement

<p><b>Tasks Menu 1 – Values/Ethics: possible options to select from or add your own to complete the above table:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undertake ‘values-audit’ – (half-page point-form description of values utilised &amp; demonstrated within practice setting).</li> <li>2. Undertake audit of key AASW Ethical principles identified in agency policies/ documentation.</li> <li>3. Use diary/journal/ log for self reflection about assumptions and values and their impact on practice – for basis of discussion in FE supervision.</li> <li>4. Identify differences in multi-disciplinary roles i.e. social worker vs other human service workers and where Social Work “fits” in this broader realm.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Tasks Menu 2 – Organisational Context: Possible options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and list key organisational procedures/documentation related to risk management.</li> <li>2. Draw eco-map of key related services.</li> <li>3. Undertake an analysis of ‘client feedback’ systems (identify evaluation/feedback forms, termination interviews etc)</li> <li>4. Analyse how ‘informal power’ is expressed and managed within the agency (discuss with FE).</li> </ol>
<p><b>Tasks Menu 3 – Use of Knowledge in Practice: Possible options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and describe the key theories that underpin common professional practices seen within the practice setting.</li> <li>2. Undertake a ‘theory-audit’ related to a specific case identifying as many theories as you can that relate to this case – informing both assessment and intervention.</li> <li>3. In supervision, present theoretical-frameworks section of <i>Organisational Analysis Assessment</i>.</li> <li>4. To become more informed about a particular theory that I am less familiar with and articulate its relevance within the placement practice context.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Tasks Menu 4 – SW Processes, Skills &amp; Relationships: Possible options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete and submit agency referral documentation (provide written evidence).</li> <li>2. Develop a case plan with identified tasks and desired outcomes.</li> <li>3. Keep diary of key events and tasks undertaken.</li> <li>4. Provide a case-presentation (to team or within supervision).</li> <li>5. Provide written summary or minutes from an agency meeting.</li> <li>6. Actively participate in the work setting and agency team (attend team meetings, present information, propose agenda items).</li> </ol>
<p><b>Tasks Menu 5 – Self-Learning &amp; Professional Development: Options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undertake placement-specific skills stock-take and review this at mid and final points of placement.</li> <li>2. Keep a journal recording tasks/events with personal reflections/reactions on use of self.</li> <li>3. Develop ongoing learning-plan for next placement.</li> <li>4. Completion of ‘<i>Social self awareness exercise</i>’ (pp. 156–159 in Fook J, 1993, <i>Radical casework: A theory of practice</i>, Allen &amp; Unwin)</li> <li>5. Collate evidence of proactiveness within supervision – preparation undertaken, agendas prepared, constructive feedback responded to etc.</li> <li>6. List self-care strategies for self-care and identify how the personal affects the professional realm.</li> <li>7. Use diary/journal/log for self reflection about personal feelings and reactions to placement experiences – for basis of discussion in FE supervision.</li> <li>8. Complete a Significant Learning Experience analysis of an incident on placement – present to Supervisor(s).</li> <li>9. Completion of – ‘<i>Assessing your Preferred Learning Strategies</i>’ (pp. 19–22 in Cleak H &amp; Wilson J, 2007 <i>Making the most of field placement</i>, Thomson)</li> </ol>

<b>Tasks Menu 6 – Research: Options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and summarise current literature relating to placement (client groups, problem foci, intervention methods).</li> <li>2. Develop a proposal for a research or evaluation project documenting parameters, hypotheses, questions, outcome measures, tools.</li> <li>3. Draft three potential research questions that relevant to this agency and/or client group.</li> <li>4. Complete a literature review relating to one of these research questions.</li> </ol>

<b>Tasks Menu 7 – Social Policy: Possible options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete <i>Organisational-Analysis</i> noting social policy related aspects.</li> <li>2. Write a mock ‘Letter to the Editor’ about a social issue of concern to your agency/client group/field of practice.</li> <li>3. Undertake a Literature Review on a placement-related social policy issue.</li> <li>4. Provide a written summary of current social &amp; professional issues in this field of practice</li> <li>5. Identify and list legislation relevant within this field of practice.</li> <li>6. Undertake and write-up a policy analysis on an issue related to placement setting.</li> </ol>

**Tasks Menu suggestions for Final Placement**

<b>Tasks Menu 1 – Values &amp; Ethics: Possible options to select from or add your own to complete the above table:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide case-presentation (in supervision or team-meeting etc) on power-related issues.</li> <li>2. Written reflection about an ethical issue that has emerged during placement.</li> <li>3. Written reflection about how AASW Code of Ethics is integrated into practice at that agency.</li> </ol>

<b>Tasks Menu 2 – Organisational Context: Possible options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undertake an analysis of ‘risk management’ issues within placement or for a specific client/case (identify keys issues in point form)</li> <li>2. Write a mock press-release highlighting a current social issue impacting on, or being addressed, by the agency/organisation.</li> <li>3. Identify and list legislation relevant to the organisational context and field of practice.</li> <li>4. Written summary of current social/professional issues in this field – (half-page dot points).</li> </ol>

<b>Tasks Menu 3 – Use of Knowledge in Practice: Possible options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undertake a case-study analysis identifying issues relating to disadvantage and/or power for the client and/or social worker and/or agency.</li> <li>2. Describe at least two theoretical frameworks that inform an assessment of a case or other professional activity.</li> <li>3. Describe my knowledge of a particular field of practice (e.g. family violence) and how this has been used to intervene in a case or other activity.</li> </ol>

<b>Tasks Menu 4 – Processes, Skills &amp; Relationships: Possible options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plan, conduct and evaluate interviews with individuals/families (observed by Field Educator).</li> <li>2. Plan, develop and evaluate a group work intervention (presented to Field Educator).</li> <li>3. Undertake a facilitation or co-facilitation role in a group work session.</li> <li>4. Prepare, complete and submit agency specific assessment and/or intervention documentation.</li> <li>5. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of social work practice and role with in the agency setting (presentation to supervisor or at team meeting).</li> </ol>

**Tasks Menu 5 – Self-Learning & Professional Development: Options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:**

1. Undertake placement-specific skills stock-take and critically review skills development at mid and final points of placement.
2. Develop ongoing learning-plan for beginning employment and include this in a mock job application letter.
3. Completion of ‘Social self awareness exercise’ (pp.156–159 in Fook J, 1993, *Radical casework: A theory of practice*, Allen & Unwin)
4. Collate evidence of proactiveness within supervision – preparation undertaken, agendas prepared, constructive feedback responded to etc
5. List self-care strategies for self-care and identify how the personal affects the professional realm.
6. Completion of – ‘Assessing your preferred learning strategies’ (pp. 19–22 in Cleak H & Wilson J, 2007 *Making the most of field placement*, Thomson)
7. Use diary/journal/ log for self reflection about openness to views of others and respect for different opinions and approaches – for basis of discussion in FE supervision.

**Tasks Menu 6 – Research: Options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:**

1. Identify and summarise current literature relating to placement (client groups, problem foci, intervention methods).
2. Develop a proposal for a research or evaluation project documenting parameters, hypotheses, questions, outcome measures, tools.
3. Create project work-plan including timelines and required resources.
4. Draft three potential research questions that relevant to this agency and/or client group.
5. Undertake background Literature Review for placement specific research/evaluation project (or designated part thereof).
6. Establish and coordinate a research project reference group.
7. Complete Ethics Application (or relevant part thereof).
8. Successfully recruit participants for project.
9. Collect and record data for project.
10. Appropriately analyse data collected (quantitative and/or qualitative).
11. Write project reports (draft & final versions).
12. Develop dissemination plan for project results/findings/recommendations.
13. Disseminate project results.

**Tasks Menu 7 – Social policy: Possible options to select from, adapt, or add your own to complete the above table:**

1. Develop a set of recommendations based on a piece of policy analysis.
2. Undertake a Literature Review on a placement-related social policy issue
3. Identify key steps in developing and implementing an advocacy/social action plan

### Field Education Learning Plan, Mid Placement Review & Final Assessment Report

Student Name:	_____		
Agency Name:	_____		
Agency Task Supervisor:	_____		
Social Work Field Educator:	_____		
University Liaison Person:	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> HSW331/314	<input type="checkbox"/> HSW415	Rural Focus Placement:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Start date:	_____	Finish Date	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Part Time	Days Per Week:	_____

<b>Brief Description of Agency or Program Focus</b>

<b>Brief Summary of Student's Key Learning Goals for this Placement</b>

<b>Brief Summary of Placement Tasks</b>

<p><b><u>Learning Area 1 – Values, ethics and professional practice:</u></b></p> <p><i>Awareness of contextually relevant ethics in accordance with the AASW Code of Ethics</i></p>	
1.1	Demonstrates an awareness of the relevance of the AASW Code of Ethics within the placement setting (eg promotion of social justice and commitment to the dignity, value and uniqueness of individuals, social units, communities and cultures).
1.2	Demonstrates an understanding of power relationships and structures that can give rise to and perpetuate relationships of inequality and social marginalisation for the target population, and demonstrates an ability to work constructively with issues of power and authority.
1.3	Maintains an open and respectful perspective towards the values, views and opinions of others and is able to seek to incorporate notions of individual rights and needs, and collective responsibilities.
1.4	Demonstrates an ability to recognise and understand one’s own assumptions and values and their ability to impact on practice (especially within situations of conflicts of values and interest).
1.5	Demonstrates an understanding of social work as a profession and how it differs from other related professions.
1.6	Demonstrates an understanding of issues such as privacy and confidentiality in relation to the ethical management of client records, including relevant legislation and agency policies.
<p><b>Goals, tasks and methods of assessment for Learning Area 1 – Values, ethics and professional practice</b></p>	
1.	
2.	
3.	
<p><b><u>Mid Placement Review:</u></b></p> <p>Student’s Comments on Progress:</p> <p>Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:</p> <p><b>Overall Mid Placement Rating for Learning Area 1:</b> Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....</p>	
<p><b><u>Final Assessment Report:</u></b></p> <p>Student’s Comments on Progress:</p> <p>Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:</p> <p><b>Overall Final Rating for Learning Area 1:</b> Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....</p>	

<p><b><u>Learning Area 2 – Organisational context</u></b></p> <p><i>An understanding of the organisational, legal and political contexts of human services processes.</i></p>	
2.1	Demonstrates an understanding of the local and wider context in which the organisation operates (in particular the direct practice and social policy priorities of people living in the local region).
2.2	Demonstrates an appreciation of the connection between individual problems, public issues and structural disadvantage.
2.3	Demonstrates an awareness of and adherence to the organisational policies and procedures relating to workplace health and safety, risk management, and duty of care obligations to consumers. This includes awareness of Human Rights and other legal obligations.
<p><b>Goals, tasks and methods of assessment for Learning Area 2 – Organisational context</b></p>	
1.	
2.	
3.	
<p><b><u>Mid Placement Review:</u></b></p> <p>Student’s Comments on Progress:</p> <p>Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:</p> <p><b>Overall Mid Placement Rating for Learning Area 2:</b> Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....</p>	
<p><b><u>Final Assessment Report:</u></b></p> <p>Student’s Comments on Progress:</p> <p>Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:</p> <p><b>Overall Final Rating for Learning Area 2:</b> Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....</p>	

<p><b><u>Learning Area 3 – Use of knowledge in practice:</u></b></p> <p><i>An understanding of theories and methodologies relevant to practice and an ability to reflect critically upon their use and application.</i></p>
<p>3.1 Able to identify a range of social work theories relevant to the practice setting.</p> <p>3.2 Able to articulate the relationship between theory and social work practice within the practice setting.</p> <p>3.3 Able to articulate the relationship between theory and social work practice at a macro-level (e.g. community &amp; societal implications).</p>
<p><b>Goals, tasks and methods of assessment for Learning Area 3 – Use of knowledge in practice</b></p>
<p>1.</p>
<p>2.</p>
<p>3.</p>
<p><b><u>Mid Placement Review:</u></b></p> <p>Student’s Comments on Progress:</p>  <p>Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:</p>  <p><b>Overall Mid Placement Rating for Learning Area 3:</b> Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....</p>
<p><b><u>Final Assessment Report:</u></b></p> <p>Student’s Comments on Progress:</p>  <p>Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:</p>  <p><b>Overall Final Rating for Learning Area 3:</b> Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....</p>

**Learning Area 4 – Processes, skills and relationships:**

*An ability to form constructive relationships with individuals, groups and communities including user groups, colleagues, professionals and people in other significant roles / positions.*

**4.1 – Communication Skills:**

- 4.1.1 Demonstrates clear and effective interpersonal communication skills (both verbal and non-verbal) with individuals, groups and communities.
- 4.1.2 Able to conduct single or joint interviews and demonstrates the ability to practice strategically (to engage, mobilise, challenge and encourage people in the change process).
- 4.1.4 Able to deal with situations involving anger, conflict and challenging behavior.
- 4.1.5 Able to write analytically and to distinguish between fact and opinion.
- 4.1.6 Able to incorporate formal knowledge and professional principles into documentation.
- 4.1.7 Able to prepare written assessment reports that demonstrate the ability to gather relevant information about and with the client/ group/ or community.
- 4.1.8 Able to use information technology for recording information, word-processing and data analysis.
- 4.1.9 Adheres to documented policies within the agency: necessary recording processes – reports, assessment schedules, administrative Documentation, statistical procedures, letters, etc.

**Goals, tasks and methods of assessment for Learning Area 4.1 – Communication Skills**

1.

2.

**4.2 – Assessment, Intervention, Referral and Evaluation:**

- 4.2.1 Able to undertake an assessment of individuals and groups across a diverse range of life circumstances.
- 4.2.2 Able to use relevant organisational assessment and referral frameworks
- 4.2.3 Demonstrates understanding of both formal and informal methods for evaluating Social Work interventions and ability to articulate these to both service user and supervisor.
- 4.2.4 Able to implement the intervention plan, engaging in activities such as: facilitation, mediation, negotiation and advocacy on behalf of service users; counseling, education and skills transference; coordination and liaison with other service providers (in collaboration with the client /service user); crisis intervention; working with an interpreters.
- 4.2.5 Able to implement strategies to support and assist clients to find new ways of coping.

**Goals, tasks and methods of assessment for Learning Area 4.2 – Assessment, Intervention, Referral and Evaluation:**

1.

2.



**Learning Area 5 – Self learning and professional development:**

*The ability to take responsibility for one’s own learning and development, and to perform at a level of competence appropriate to a beginning social work practitioner, including the skills to manage one’s future career and the transition from university to professional practice.*

- 5.1 Demonstrate the ability to participate proactively in negotiating and developing the supervisory relationship.
- 5.2 Demonstrate an ability to formulate and articulate one’s own learning needs and objectives.
- 5.3 Demonstrate a willingness to take risks and expose own practice for scrutiny from supervisor (and other team members).
- 5.4 Demonstrate an awareness of personal feelings and experience and how these affect practice.
- 5.5 Demonstrate understanding of the theory of critical reflection & an ability to use this approach to critically examine own practice.
- 5.6 Demonstrate the capacity to work with increasing autonomy and professional responsibility.
- 5.7 Identify areas for future learning & development & recognise the importance of future professional development as a social worker.
- 5.8 Ability to demonstrate appropriate responsibility, accountability, reliability and initiative within the work setting.

**Goals, tasks and methods of assessment for Learning Area 5 – Self-learning & professional development**

1.

2.

3.

**Mid Placement Review:**

Student’s Comments on Progress:

Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:

**Overall Mid Placement Rating for Learning Area 5:** Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....

**Final Assessment Report:**

Student’s Comments on Progress:

Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:

**Overall Final Rating for Learning Area 5:** Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....

<p><b><u>Learning Area 6 – Research:</u></b></p> <p><i>Recognition of research as an integral part of social work practice; demonstrating knowledge and understanding of all types and stages of social research</i></p>
<p>6.1 Demonstrates an understanding of how research knowledge informs practice (e.g. consulting published literature).</p> <p>6.2 Able to locate literature relevant to practice area (evidence-informed practice)</p> <p>6.3 Able to identify researchable topics/issues within practice setting</p> <p>6.4 Able to conduct research and program evaluation using sound methodological approaches (If placement includes a research or evaluation project)</p> <p>6.5 Demonstrates an ability to seek out and establish collaborative partnerships (networks) with others working in the field or related fields, in order to obtain relevant information.</p>
<p><b>Goals, tasks and methods of assessment for Learning Area 6 – Research</b></p>
<p>1.</p>
<p>2.</p>
<p>3.</p>
<p><b><u>Mid Placement Review:</u></b></p> <p>Student’s Comments on Progress:</p> <p>Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:</p> <p><b>Overall Mid Placement Rating for Learning Area 6:</b> Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....</p>
<p><b><u>Final Assessment Report:</u></b></p> <p>Student’s Comments on Progress:</p> <p>Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:</p> <p><b>Overall Final Rating for Learning Area 6:</b> Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....</p>

**Learning Area 7 – Social Policy:**

*An understanding of the legislative and social policies which influence the different fields of practice including knowledge of relevant legislative and policy frameworks.*

7.1 – Able to identify relevant legislation, policies and regulations relevant to practice area and whether these are consistent with social work values and principles

7.2 – Able to analyze the impacts of relevant legislation, policies and regulations on practice

7.3 – Demonstrates an understanding of current debates, social issues and/or politics which impact on the field of practice

7.3 – Demonstrates an ability to understand policy development, community and political processes involved in linking direct practice experience with broader social change objectives.

**Goals, tasks and methods of assessment for Learning Area 7 – Social Policy**

1.

2.

3.

**Mid Placement Review:**

Student’s Comments on Progress:

Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:

**Overall Mid Placement Rating for Learning Area 7:** Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....

**Final Assessment Report:**

Student’s Comments on Progress:

Field Educator/Agency Task Supervisor Comments on Student’s Progress:

**Overall Final Rating for Learning Area 7:** Student: ..... Field Educator/Task Supervisor: .....



<b>Future Planning:</b>
1. Would you be prepared to field teach a Deakin student next year? If so, do you have a preference for a particular program and/or year? 2. Any other comments to aid future planning?

<b>Other Worker or Consumer Comments on Student's Performance</b>
Completion of this section is optional. It allows for additional formal comments to be made concerning the student's performance by a worker (other than the Field Educator) and/or service users with whom the student has had frequent contact in relation to their Field Education experience.

**Signatures (confirming the joint completion and acceptance of the):**

Field Education Learning Plan     
  Mid Placement Review     
  Final Assessment Report

Student name & signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Educator Name and Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Task Supervisor Name and Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

The student has met your expectations for a first/final placement in your agency

Yes	No

**Student to note:** Field Education Learning Plan to be submitted by Day 20, Mid Placement Review by Day 40, Final Assessment Report by day 65 to:

Social Work Field Education Unit  
 School of Health & Social Development  
 Geelong Waterfront Campus  
 Geelong Vic 3217 Australia  
 Email: norah.hosken@deakin.edu.au  
 Fax: (03) 5227 8356

**A copy must also be given to the University Liaison Person.**



## Appendix 4: What to do if a student is not performing to standard

- 1 The Field Educator talks with the student as soon as they notice that he or she is having difficulties. The Field Educator clearly explains in what areas the student is not performing, relating this to the units and elements of competence in the evaluation schedule as explained in the Field Education Learning Plan and Assessment Reports (see Appendix 3). This discussion is minuted and signed by both parties.
- 2 The Field Educator contacts the University Liaison Person to advise of the difficulties and a meeting is organised for all parties.
- 3 At this meeting, the parties look at strategies to address the difficulties that the student is experiencing. Minutes are kept for review.
- 4 The Field Educator arranges a review meeting to follow within two weeks at which the student's subsequent performance is assessed by the Field Educator and University Liaison Person.
- 5 The Field Educator argues the reason for the assessment recommendation referring to the review minutes and assessment documentation.
- 6 The University Liaison Person ensures that the student has been given a fair hearing and adequate opportunities to meet the assessment requirements.
- 7 If the Field Educator and University Liaison Person agree that the student has now met the required standard, the placement continues without additional supervision or liaison.
- 8 If the Field Educator and University Liaison Person agree that the student has not yet met the required standard, there are three options, depending on the level of competence of the student:
  - (i) The student continues with the placement with a further work plan. This is considered if the Field Educator and University Liaison Person agree that the student has made some progress although he or she is not as far advanced as expected. The Field Educator and University Liaison Person believe the student will be on track in the immediate future. They meet again in two weeks.
  - (ii) The placement continues on condition that the student agrees to an extension of up to a maximum of four weeks.
  - (iii) The placement is suspended. This happens when the student fails to make sufficient progress with the work plan, and the Field Educator and University Liaison Person do not think an extension will bring the student up to standard, or the agency does not have the resources to meet his or her learning needs.
- 9 If the Field Educator and the University Liaison Person disagree on the recommendation, a meeting is organised with the Field Education Coordinator. The Field Education Coordinator has the final decision on the grade recommended to the Fieldwork Review Committee. Meanwhile, the placement is suspended.



## Appendix 5: Critical Incident Report

A critical incident is one that you believe or feel was crucial to your learning or practice as a Social Worker or had a significant effect on it. It is an incident that is critical to your development as a Social Worker on placement. It may mark a turning point, or, in a particular way, a change in your thinking or acting.

A critical incident may be an incident which: went unusually well; did not happen as planned; was ordinary and typical; captured the essential nature of social work; was particularly demanding; raised conflicts or doubts; caused you to reflect on the nature of social work or your role as a Social Worker.

Note: You should choose a specific incident that you can write up briefly, rather than a case or situation.

### The Critical Incident Report

#### *Presentation, word limit requirements and submission*

Written assignments should be 2000 words, submitted on A4 size paper, top left corner stapled and not folded.

Assignments may be submitted using double-sided printing.

You must keep a backup copy of every assignment you submit, until the marked assignment has been returned to you. In the unusual event that one of your assignments is misplaced, you will need to submit your backup copy.

Any work you submit may be checked by electronic or other means for the purposes of detecting collusion and/or plagiarism.

**On-campus students** must submit each assignment with a Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Sciences assignment cover sheet, which should be collected from the Health - Student and Academic Services Office (H-SAS) on your Campus (Geelong Waterfront Campus: Room D2.216). Assignments should be submitted to the Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Sciences H-SAS.

**Off-campus students** must submit their assignments with the approved assignment cover sheet. Refer to the *Off campus student orientation webpage* <[www.deakin.edu.au/distancesupport](http://www.deakin.edu.au/distancesupport)> (retrieved 13 December 2010), under the 'Exams and assessment' link, for information on how to download the appropriate cover sheet and for information on how to submit your assignments.

#### *Referencing*

The Assignment should make reference to some of the key social work theory and practice literature covered in your course to date. Please use Harvard (author-date) referencing style. You should consult the Deakin University '*Guide to assessment writing and referencing*' (3rd Edition), page 48, for information on how to use this referencing style. The guide, published by the Division of Student Life, is distributed free to all beginning students, may be purchased from the Deakin bookshop or can be downloaded from <[www.deakin.edu.au/referencing](http://www.deakin.edu.au/referencing)> (retrieved 13 December 2010).

#### *You need to address the following in your critical incident report:*

- Describe the context of the incident (e.g. how far into the placement it happened, your role in the agency at the time, the type of agency).
- Describe the incident itself and why the incident was critical to you; what you were thinking and feeling during and after the incident; what you found most demanding about the situation.

Describe what you learned about:

- Social work as a profession e.g. values, roles, skills, ethics, code of conduct.
- Social work theory, practice and skills
- Yourself as a social work professional.
- Yourself as a learner.

Discuss what aspects of your theoretical assumptions (e.g. about social work, causes of human behaviour, styles of intervention) were reflected and challenged in this incident; and how your learning from this incident has changed your thinking and your practice.



## Appendix 6: Social Work at Deakin

### Course structure and unit descriptions

The BSW is offered at pass or honours level. The first level of the course provides a general introduction to the social sciences. An honours stream is available in the fourth year.

Level 1	
<b>Trimester 1</b> HSW101 SW Theory & Practice A ASC101 Introduction to Sociology A AIP107 Contemporary Australian Politics HBS107 Understanding Health	<b>Trimester 2</b> HSW111 SW Theory & Practice B HSW118 SW Theory & Practice C HBS110 <i>or</i> Health Behaviour HPS111 <i>or</i> Introduction to Psychology A ASC102 Introduction to Sociology B
Level 2	
<b>Trimester 1</b> AIP230 Public Policy in Australia HSW221 Social Work Research in Ethical and Political Contexts HSW235 SW Theory & Practice D Elective (1)	<b>Trimester 2</b> HSW219 Self & Society MLS231 Legal and Ethical Contexts of Social Work HSW212 SW Theory & Practice E Elective (1)
Level 3	
<b>Trimester 1</b> HSW314 Social Work Field Education A (4 credit points)	<b>Trimester 2</b> ASC304 Culture & Control HSW316 Critical Social Policy HSW313 SW Theory & Practice F HSW322 Applied Social Research in Ethical and Political Contexts
Level 4	
<b>Trimester 1</b> HSW434 Administration and Policy Development HSW402 SW Theory & Practice G HSW452 SW Theory & Practice H Elective (1) for Pass stream HSW456 Honours Research Project A HSW457 Honours Research Project B	<b>Trimester 2</b> HSW415 Social Work Field Education B (Block 2) (HSW455 Honours)

### ***HSW101 Introduction to Social Work: Social Work Theory and Practice A***

This unit aims to introduce students to aspects of the history and current context of social work practice, and to begin to develop an appreciation of the role of social work and the human services generally. The unit is descriptive and informative in helping to unfold for students the diversity of the social work field and its history. It is also critical and interpretive. The unit also provides an introduction to the different disciplinary aspects of the social work program and how they fit together in the study of social work.

### ***ASC101 Introduction to Sociology A***

The unit provides an introduction to sociology and introduces students to sociological concepts and theories in order to develop a sociological outlook. A main purpose of the study of sociology is to trace the relationship of the individual to the social world. This unit will take specific and familiar areas of interest for the beginning student, and through them develop ways of thinking sociologically. The unit will introduce students to some of the central questions asked by sociologists regarding the nature of society as a means of introducing students to the sociological perspective. Topics included are the consumer society, the sociology of the body and identity formation.

### ***AIP107 Contemporary Australian Politics***

This unit introduces students to the ideas and principles that underpin Australia's political institutions and inform daily political life. We also explore challenges and changes involving Australian politics today, and assess our capacity to realise core democratic values. We consider why political processes work the way they do and how well or effectively they are working. Wider social, economic and cultural processes are drawn into account as we examine a range of current issues including the role of the media, human rights protections, environmental degradation, inequality, and the opportunities presented by new information and communications technologies.

### ***HBS107 Understanding Health***

This interdisciplinary unit examines the diversity of media and other images of health and meanings attributed to health; the complex range of interactions that influence the health of individuals and populations; the determinants of selected health issues in urban and rural Australia, as well as in global contexts; and, explores a range of models and approaches and their impact on health outcomes. Topics include: contemporary understandings of health; social, biological, natural environments and employment and education as determinants of health; understanding health research; indigenous health; the evolution of health promotion; illicit drugs and alcohol; social exclusion and healthy ageing; mental health.

### ***HSW111 Theories for Social Work Practice: Social Work Theory and Practice B***

This unit aims to provide students with an introduction to a broad range of theories which inform social work practice. The unit goes beyond developing an understanding of social work theory to develop skills in applying theory to understand and intervene with individuals, communities and society.

### ***HSW118 Social Work Methods in Context: Social Work Theory and Practice C***

This unit examines the role of social work across a number of fields of practice. With a focus on mental health, it explores the construction of complex personal and social problems; methods of social work practice; social work values and attitudes; service user perspectives and experiences; and the context of service delivery. The unit aims to build on and extend students' understanding of critical social work theory and practice.

### ***HBS110 Health Behaviour***

Topics include:

- The impact of behavioural health issues including tobacco smoking, alcohol use and abuse, healthy and disordered eating, weight management and exercise on health and chronic disease
- The influence of psychological and biopsychosocial factors and stress on health and health behaviour, and the efficacy of cognitive approaches and coping strategies in addressing these
- A critical examination of the impact of the physical environment, cultural practices and legal policies on health behaviours
- The prevention, behavioural factors and management of chronic disease including heart disease, diabetes and cancer

**HPS111 Introduction to Psychology A**

The central theme of this unit is to introduce the different aspects of the discipline of psychology as a behavioural science. The unit begins with a history of the evolution of psychology as a discipline. We explore the fundamental questions that motivate the field and the major milestones in the development of psychology as a recognised scientific discipline. In this context, we provide an overview of the scientific method and its relevance to psychological research, and we discuss ethics and other key issues that arise in the process of acquiring and applying knowledge in this way. The unit then reviews the current state of knowledge in the field. First, we provide an overview of three theoretical approaches to understanding behaviour; these include biological bases of behaviour, how we make sense of the world and how we learn, remember, process and communicate information about ourselves and our environment. We look at the influence of in-built drives and the influence of culture on our motivation to behave in certain ways. This leads us into a discussion of forensic psychology and how we might understand offender behaviour. We also examine the role of stress in human behaviour and the physical and psychological health consequences of chronic stress. The unit provides an introduction to the application of psychology across different fields.

**ASC102 Introduction to Sociology B**

The study of global and national inequalities is possibly one of the most important areas of study in sociology. Patterns of inequality are based on categories such as social class, gender, race and ethnicity. The first section of this unit will explore these categories as well as sociological explanations by major theorists in the area. The unit then moves on to an examination of globalisation, work and global risks.

**AIP230 Public Policy in Australia**

The policy decisions and activities of governments affect all aspects of the lives of citizens. At the same time, non-government actors including firms and interest groups - from the local through to the global - participate extensively in the policy process, with the boundary between public and private action contested and uncertain. This unit examines a range of important, contemporary policy issue areas such as the environment, health, welfare, employment and the economy. The aim is to provide an introduction to the tools and theories of public policy, focusing on questions of power, policy networks, intergovernmental relations, the influence of market models, and the debates over governance and the 'regulatory state'.

**HSW221 Social Work Research in Ethical and Political Contexts**

This unit aims to demystify social research by showing how it is a formal process of social inquiry which builds on the ways in which we daily inquire into social events and construct everyday knowledge about what we need to know. The approach taken is that there are different ways of knowing, which influence how we understand social problems and formulate research questions. Students will be introduced to the basics of research design for social work practice. This includes an overview of a range of research methods and approaches. The unit also shows how 'research' is an important part of the relationship between 'theory' and 'practice', in all its forms: as direct service, policy and program development and evaluation. The unit provides a basis for ASK322/HSW322.

**HSW235 Community Development: Social Work Theory and Practice D**

Community development work assists community groups to determine their own needs and to obtain resources to meet those needs. Community development is a form of practice, a broad philosophical and political approach which focuses on collective efforts to improve community wellbeing, and is based on a critical understanding of inequality in our sociopolitical structures. The unit aims to provide an understanding of community development theory and practice perspectives, to present different models of community work and to critically analyse the value and ideological underpinnings of community development practice. This unit is relevant for students across a number of professional practice areas.

**HSW219 Self and Society**

This unit provides an overview of theories about the social construction of the self. It will ground these theories in an analysis of human development across the life course in the context of the major social divisions in society. The unit will examine theoretical frameworks for understanding how the experiences of oppression and domination are internalized; humanism, personal growth and alienation; psychoanalytical theory, politics and the psyche; material conditions, social practices and lived experience; feminism, psychology and gendered subjectivities; postmodernism, discourse and subjectivity; the social construction of childhood; spirituality, ageing and diversity and ecopsychology, nature and the ecological self.

### ***MLS231 Legal and Ethical Contexts of Social Work***

This unit introduces students to a basic understanding of the political and legal institutions in Australia, including the structure of legislation, the legal system, and the manner in which the community is regulated by legal and ethical obligations. In particular this unit introduces social work students to some of the legal and ethical issues which are likely to be encountered in social work practice. We will study such diverse areas of law as child abuse, family violence, juvenile justice, negligence, confidentiality, record keeping and the professional responsibility so important in professional life.

### ***HSW212 Social Work Processes and Interventions: Social Work Theory and Practice E***

This unit builds on the work undertaken in ASK111/HSW111 and will centre on the competency requirements for social work practice. It will be conducted in workshop format focusing on the development of self-awareness, listening and communication skills, basic interviewing skills, beginning assessment and case planning skills. Practice skill development and analysis of professional values and ethics will be integral to the unit.

### ***HSW314 Social Work Field Education A***

In consultation with their academic and field educators, students are expected to develop an individualised educational plan for the practicum. This plan should be designed so that they are able to demonstrate that they have begun to master the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) practice standards by working with selected clientele and sharing in selected aspects of the associated work of the agencies in which they are placed. Students will be expected to reflect critically on day-to-day experiences in practicum, explore issues and make verbal and written presentations to peers, colleagues and mentors. Students are required to attend three integration seminars on campus or respond on a weekly basis to discussion questions on DSO.

### ***ASC304 Culture and Control: Boundaries and Identities***

This unit deals with the sociological issues related to deviance and social control in two ways. One approach involves examining theories of social control and the construction of marginal identities as these relate to conceptions of culture and the social world. The concepts will also be examined as powerful assumptions in changing professional practice. The second approach includes in-depth case studies which illustrate the various theoretical issues. These case studies include such topics as prisons and punishment, homelessness, women and medical science, madness, and drug and alcohol use and abuse.

### ***HSW316 Critical Social Policy***

In the present climate of the redistribution of resources, many individuals, groups and communities experience powerlessness and inequality. Underlying this is a dominant discourse that has marginalised social policy in favour of economic rationalism. The aim of this unit is to present an approach to social policy in Australia which critically addresses the dominance of the economic over the social and highlights ways in which social policy responds, or fails to respond, to diversity. The unit also aims to demonstrate the links between social policy and social work practice, so that graduates may be better informed about the policy contexts that influence their practice.

### ***HSW313 Anti-Oppressive Approaches to Social Work: Social Work Theory and Practice F***

This unit links anti-oppressive theories and empowerment perspectives to social work practice. It develops counselling, intervention and assessment skills and focuses on particular social work settings and specific client groups. The unit aims to develop specific skills in working with children, families, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal communities, people who experience a disability, women, men, victims and offenders. In addition, we will be exploring specific issues such as drug and alcohol use, and grief and loss. Social work theory, values and ethics will be integral to this practice unit. Flexible modes of teaching will be employed, including role plays and video work.

### ***HSW322 Applied Social Research in Ethical and Political Context***

The unit aims to develop students' research skills as another social work method or approach, through an understanding of research as applied in evaluation and needs assessment. The unit shows how applied research through evaluation and needs assessment is linked to policies, programs and modes of practice (case work, group work and community work), and can facilitate change through identifying gaps in services and evaluating the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of existing policies, programs and practices. The unit will introduce students to approaches, designs and methods that can be applied through appropriate research to enhance social work practice and to achieve social change.

**HSW434 Administration and Policy Development: The Organisational Context**

The unit relates professional social work practice to organisational theory, models of administration and management, and the domain of industrial relations, paying particular attention to the public sector and to human services delivery systems. Organisational forms in which social workers operate will be discussed, including the different levels of government and the non-government sector. The work context for social work practice will be analysed and a number of critiques of the established order presented, including radical change models and feminist analysis of bureaucracies. Social control functions of public welfare will be highlighted as well as issues relating to social justice and public welfare.

**HSW402 Critical Approaches to Social Work: Social Work Theory and Practice G**

This unit aims to develop students' generic skills and practice theories for ongoing professional development in the workplace. It takes a critical reflective approach and explores what some of the newer developments in social theory (feminism, critical postmodernism) offer in drawing up frameworks and strategies for critical practice. The unit also aims to assist students to develop ways of dealing with complex settings and issues, and to develop a process and framework for continuing learning from their own practice. Students will be asked to discuss critical incidents from their own practice experience to explore their own processes of theory/practice development.

**HSW452 Working in Uncertainty: Social Work Theory and Practice H**

This unit aims to help graduating students develop a vision of the professional social work role and identity within contexts of change (at local, national and international levels) and uncertainty. What challenges currently face social work, and how can we work proactively within changing contexts of practice? Topics include: globalisation; the professions in context (professional identity, managerialism, case management, industrial issues); technological developments and their effects on practice; post-colonialism and social movements (human rights, identity politics, work with migrants/refugees); social development and international social work; diversity and inclusivity; citizenship and the nature of community; ethics; lifelong learning and the contemporary professional; envisioning contemporary social work in uncertainty.

**HSW456 Honours Research Project in Social Work A**

Students are required to negotiate a topic with a member of the social work staff, complete a supervised research project and submit a research thesis at the end of the year of enrolment in the Honours program.

**HSW457 Honours Research Project in Social Work B**

Students are required to negotiate a topic with a member of the social work staff, complete a supervised research project and submit a research thesis at the end of the year of enrolment into the Honours program.

**HSW415 Social Work Field Education B**

In consultation with their academic and field educators, students are expected to develop an individualised educational plan for the practicum. This plan should be designed so that they will be able to give evidence that they have begun to master the Australian Association of Social Workers practice standards of competency for social workers by working with selected clientele and sharing in selected aspects of the associated work of the agencies in which they are placed. Students will be expected to reflect critically on day-to-day experiences in the practicum, explore issues and make verbal and written presentations to peers, colleagues and mentors. Students are required to attend three integration seminars on campus or respond on a weekly basis to discussion questions on DSO.

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