

# Occupational Therapy Practice Education Manual 2024



## Faculty of Health School of Health and Social Development



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

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It is the responsibility of the student to be familiar with the contents of the practice education manual and it is understood that the student agrees to abide by the policies and procedures outlined.

It is also the students' responsibility to be familiar with and to adhere to the placement provider's policies and procedures.

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# Occupational Therapy Practice Educators Manual

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## Staff Profile

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The Practice Education team consists of Unit Chairs/Lecturers whose unit contains a practice education component, Deakin Practice Education Facilitators (DPEF's) who have an OT clinical background and Practice Education Professional staff.

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Please note that many staff are employed on a part-time basis and therefore may not respond immediately to messages.

This information is current, though subject to change. Updated information will be available in the [Student Handbook](#)

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## Introduction to Practice Education

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### DEFINITIONS

#### Practice Educator (PE)

This term refers to the primary supervisor/practice educator of the student within the agency or organisation providing the placement.

#### Deakin Practice Education Facilitator (DPEF)

This term refers to the Deakin allocated Occupational Therapy facilitator who is responsible for supporting allocated students during their placement. The DPEF is also available to support the PE as required.

#### Practice Education

This refers to the practical component of the OT program. In other places it may be referred to as fieldwork, field education, placement, work integrated learning, clinical placement or student placement.

#### Education Provider (EP)

This refers to the educational institution or university.

#### Placement Provider / Agency

This refers to the organisation, centre, service, agency or facility providing the student placement.

#### Community Based Practice Education (CBPE)

This innovative program provides practice education via student directed occupational therapy services to communities primarily in the Barwon Southwestern region. It provides the opportunity for students to develop skills not generally experienced within traditional occupational therapy environments, in local primary schools and community-based settings.

#### Student Placement Evaluation Form (SPEF-R2)

This is the assessment form by which all Deakin students are evaluated during placement. The SPEF-R2 is a standardised assessment tool that has been adopted by many OT programs across Australia. It is available to students via CloudDeakin. Practice Educators/Supervisors will be given the option to use either an online or a hard copy version of the tool.

#### Student Placement Evaluation Form - Revised Two (SPEF-R2)

The SPEF-R2 accompanied by the reference document, the *Student Placement Evaluation Handbook* (SPEH), has been adopted by all OT programs across Australia, including the Victorian OT programs for placement assessment.

#### World Federation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT)

This term refers to the international governing body of occupational therapists.

## THE PURPOSE OF PRACTICE EDUCATION

For students to integrate knowledge, professional reasoning and professional behaviour within practice and to develop knowledge, skills and attributes to the level of competence required by qualifying Occupational Therapists (WFOT 2002, p.24)

Practice education is underpinned by the philosophy that:

- Learning is enhanced when students are required to actively link theory and practice within a supportive environment
- Students need the opportunity to demonstrate, in a professional setting, that they can meet the standards of competence required for graduation
- Practice education provides mutual benefits to students, the providers and the profession.

### WFOT practice education requirement

The WFOT and the Australian Association of Occupational Therapists (OT Australia) require that accredited occupational therapy courses include 1000 hours of practice education that reflect a range of current practice areas. Within the Deakin University Occupational Therapy program, the 1000-hour requirement is embedded within academic units across the four-year course.

## Deakin Practice Education Model

Practice Education is embedded within various academic units, which also include lectures and tutorials. In each of these units practice education is a mandatory requirement.

All students are required to undertake at least one placement in a rural or regional location (excluding the place of your principal residence).

Year Level Trimester	Unit	Practice Education Focus
Year 1 Trimester 1	HSO102	The first trimester of Year 1 focuses on preparation for practice education. Students will experience a range of practical workshops and site visits each week, with the aim of preparing them to understand current and emerging areas of practice, OH&S issues in practice, professional behaviour and risk management.
Year 1 Trimester 2	HSO104	May consist of either; 2-week block or One-week intensive block Camp experience
Year 2 Trimester 1	HSO202	One-week, full time simulated placement
Year 2 Trimester 2	HSO208	One-week, full time simulated placement
Year 3 Trimester 1	HSO305	May consist of either; Two days per week for 6 weeks or Two-week block
Year 3 Trimester 2	HSO304	8-9 week full time Community Based Practice Education (CBPE) placement
Year 4 Trimester 1	HSO405	8-9 week full time Occupational Therapy Clinical Placement
Year 4 Trimester 2	HSO418	Students will undertake an 80-hour Innovation and Evaluation (I&E) Project Placement



## Practice Education Summary

### Year 1 - HSO104

Students will participate in and observe practice in health and community organisations, developing occupational science and therapy skills and competencies.

→ Assessable SPEF-R2 Domains 1 - 5

### Year 2 - SIMULATED PLACEMENTS (HSO202 & HSO208)

Students will consolidate their learning through a week of on campus simulated practice education (full time) in which they will have the opportunity to implement their newfound knowledge in a simulated practice education setting, supported by experienced clinicians.

The purpose of these placements is to allow all second-year students to be exposed to and have time to practice key skills and abilities prior to their third and fourth year clinical placements.

→ Assessable SPEF-R2 Domains 1 - 5

### Year 3 - HSO305

Students will develop specific practice skills, according to professional competencies that underpin the profession. They will identify people's needs, choices, capacities and preferences within a person-centred approach leading to the collaborative identification of occupational therapy goals. The focus includes selecting measurement tools and methods, administering occupational therapy assessments and evaluations, observation skills, developing intervention plans, report writing and case presentations.

→ Assessable SPEF-R2 Domains 1 - 6

### Year 3 - COMMUNITY BASED PRACTICE EDUCATION (CBPE) HSO304

The CBPE Program provides student-driven occupational therapy services to communities in partnership with local agencies. It provides opportunities for students to develop skills and competencies, which are not generally covered in traditional occupational therapy programs, such as consultancy, community development and health education.

CBPE aims to provide services where occupational therapy service delivery gaps currently exist and to improve access for the local community to health services. Agencies currently include local primary schools, specialised health services, adult day programs, family support services, and community mental health agencies.

This innovative program is full time over 8-9 weeks and is structured as follows;

- One week intensive on-campus tutorial program run by DPEF's
- Remaining weeks are divided into 3 days at a local primary school and 2 days at a community-based agency

Students attend their agencies with a student peer and projects may include:

- Program development
- Research projects in the community

- Providing direct service to primary school students to achieve goal-directed school-based tasks
- Contributing to community mental health programs.

In addition to the on-campus tutorial program, DPEF's provide liaison visits to agencies as required.

→ Assessable SPEF Domains 1 - 8

#### Year 4 - Clinical Placement HSO405

The focus is to build on and extend competency development from earlier fieldwork enabling students to apply occupational therapy reasoning processes to a range of practice situations; complete the attainment of particular skills according to OT Australia professional competency requirements; develop management skills related to practice; demonstrate effective professional communication skills; reflect on learning outcomes for their studies. Students will learn to self-evaluate; and discuss their individual professional capabilities according to OT Australia accreditation, be professionally accountable, and articulate professional and personal frames of reference related to occupational therapy practice. It will take place in a variety of agencies/organisations within the health and related areas.

→ Assessable SPEF-R2 Domains 1 - 8

#### Year 4 - Innovation and Evaluation HSO418

The I&E Project Placement is the final practice education placement for the Occupational Therapy Program at Deakin University. This unit is designed to extend occupational therapy practice knowledge and skills by contributing to innovation in real practice settings, to address current issues and challenges in OT services. Students will, either individually or as part of a group, plan and/or design a new and innovative assessment, intervention or program for an occupational therapy service. Students will then implement this innovation on a pilot basis, and evaluate the success of the pilot implementation, providing the service with a full report of the project design and outcomes.

Each student is allocated 80 hours over a 10 week period. Attendance days and times will be flexible and arranged in consultation with the agency.

Example projects;

- Designing a new therapy group
- Develop a new screening assessment
- Revising or reviewing an existing assessment, intervention or program
- Develop a specific education program or package for staff/patients
- Develop a care pathway from referral to discharge
- Develop guidelines for the use of a new piece of equipment or device

→ Assessable SPEF-R2 Domains 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 (Project Stream B)

## Practice Education Styles

### Collaboration / Peer Assisted Learning (PAL)

This model is one of practice-based learning, which involves responsibility for more than one student at a time. It is suitable for all student levels in most practice areas. It is based on facilitation of peer assisted learning strategies by the PE in which the students learn together through discussion and practice. The aim is for students to support each other's learning, whilst the PE provides clinical instruction and supervision. Additional student benefits of this model include practicing teamwork skills and problem solving skills whilst experiencing a sense of shared ownership of the learning experience.

### Group Supervision

Group supervision enables shared responsibility for learning whilst offering valuable opportunities for discussion. Often the learning gained by all parties is enhanced as a result of these shared opportunities. Group supervision can also save time for a centre and/or supervisor by supporting a number of students simultaneously.

### Emerging OT roles

Deakin is committed to providing a program which prepares graduates to work in a range of new and emerging fields of employment including project management. Therefore, an important part of this commitment is to recognise the learning gained by students undertaking practice education at sites where the PE may not necessarily be an OT. This type of practice education is valuable and is always co-facilitated by one of the allocated DPEF'S, all of whom are OT's. Student benefits include more opportunities for autonomous learning, increased professional growth and enhanced lifelong learning skills.

### Shared Supervisors

It is not unusual for agencies to share a student between PE's, particularly in smaller agencies where a number of staff may work part-time or for a student to share two different agencies during one practice education placement. This model requires excellent communication and a clear definition of learning objectives early in the practice education to ensure that all parties are working toward the same goals. Both supervisors are responsible for student assessment. Shared supervisors provide students with a unique opportunity to observe different working styles.

### Flexible Learning

Flexible learning acknowledges that each student has different learning needs and utilises an individual learning style. A flexible learning environment promotes choice and negotiation to enable the development of a learning program which best suits the individual.

### Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments to a placement may be discussed with the placement provider in order to support the needs of an individual student who may have a health condition or disability. If students believe they may require reasonable adjustments to placement, they are advised to contact the Disability Resource Centre, Division of Student Administration.

## **Clinical Practice Education Goals for Occupational Therapy**

The Clinical Practice Education Goal guide was developed via a collaboration between the following OT courses; LaTrobe, Monash, Deakin and Charles Sturt. It provides a general guide for clinical goal setting during practice education at each year level.

### **What we expect from supervisors**

- Provision of a welcoming environment for students
- Provision of an acceptable work area for students
- Adequate time for the planning and implementation of a quality practice education program
- Provision of clear expectations for students
- An orientation program which introduces students to the way things work
- Supervisors must be qualified OT's to supervise students

### **What we expect from students**

#### YEAR 1

Observation and orientation to the clinical environment of occupational therapy practice.

This first placement is designed to allow students to become familiar with the role of the occupational therapist within the healthcare team. Students are beginning to develop knowledge relating to Occupational Therapy theory and may practice some clinical skills such as patient handling, observation and communication. Students should be aware of patient safety and of legal and ethical issues in practice.

#### YEAR 2

Second year units will be campus based placements that will use simulated clients. Students will be expected to work collaboratively and individually in assessment, intervention, observation and goal formation. Students will need to engage with a variety of stakeholders during simulation and have time to practice key skills and abilities that will need to be used in third and fourth year placements (and as practising Occupational Therapists).

#### YEAR 3

The goal of this placement is skill development in basic Occupational Therapy competencies, and it is expected that students will have an active involvement in assessment and treatment of clients.

#### YEAR 4

The final clinical placement allows for further development and consolidation of Occupational Therapy skills. Students should be able to demonstrate competence in assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation and demonstrate readiness for independent practice. Deakin also offers a project placement at this level, with students functioning as project managers to design and develop project proposals.

## Practice Education Preparation

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### Practice Education Orientation Program

- Prior to all placements, students are required to attend a mandatory Practice Education Orientation Session. Topics such as confidentiality and professional expectations are discussed.

### Police Record Check (PRC)

- All Deakin students are required to obtain a new Police Record Check (PRC) at the beginning of each academic year.
- Deakin uses a company called [Fit2Work](#) for all PRC processing. Students will receive an email from Fit2Work inviting them to apply for their PRC. Police Record Checks can take up to 21 days to be returned, therefore ALL students are advised to lodge their PRC application in early January.
- Students WILL NOT be able to commence placement without a current PRC. It is the students' responsibility to know when their placement is scheduled each year. Failure to acquire a PRC four weeks prior to the start date of placement will, in most instances, result in a failure of the unit. There is a fee associated with applying for a PRC.

### What is a Police Check?

A Police Check is an offence history review, which contains all court offences. If a person is convicted of an offence in the Magistrate's Court and that person commits no further offences, the conviction will be deleted from the person's record after 10 years. However, if a person commits a further offence, the record will remain. Convictions in the Children's Court will not be recorded on a Police Check after five years. Any offence for which the penalty is a fine of \$10,000 or more or 2.5 years imprisonment is never erased from the record.

State and Commonwealth legislation requires background, health and criminal record screening of all applicants for employment involving contact with persons under 18 years of age, the infirm and the aged. Employment includes unpaid work and field placement or practicum experience performed by students in the course of their studies. More information regarding Police Record checks may be found at <https://www.police.vic.gov.au/national-police-records-checks>

Students who have lived in Australia for less than 12 months and International students must obtain a PRC from the country in which they last resided.

- If a student believes there may be issues that may affect their application for a PRC, it is advised that they contact the Practice Education staff.
- Please Note: If a student does have a criminal record listed on the PRC, placement providers will receive the information (de-identified) and will have the right to refuse that student for placement. In this instance, the Deakin Practice Education team will work with the student to try and find an alternative placement. However, if two providers refuse to offer a placement to a student based on the information in the PRC, this will impact that students ability to progress in the course.
- Students are required to advise Deakin Practice Education staff of any changes to their criminal history. Including if they are:
  - Charged with an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more, or

- Convicted of found guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment in Australia and/or overseas;
- If a student's PRC reveals a disclosable criminal outcome;
  - At the time of being allocated a placement, the placement provider will be notified that the student has a disclosable outcome from their PRC. With students permission, Deakin Practice Education staff will liaise with the placement provider to review the nature of the offence(s) and whether the student is suitable and safe for placement at the agency

#### How do I get a PRC?

- Deakin will send students an email invitation via Fit2Work
- Fit2Work will then send students a link to complete the application process online. Students will be required to supply 100 points of certified identification to complete the process. More information will be provided about this in the email from Fit2Work.

When the police check is finalised, both the student and Deakin will automatically receive notification of the outcome.

Note: Students are required to upload a copy of the Summary Report to InPlace for verification.

#### Working with Children Check (WWC)

- The Working with Children Check (WWC) creates a mandatory minimum, checking standard across Victoria. The WWC Check helps to keep children safe by preventing those known to police to pose a threat to the safety of children, from engaging in either paid or voluntary work with children.
- It is a requirement that all students obtain a Working with Children Check (WWC) at the commencement of the course prior to the commencement of practice education. Students WILL NOT be able to commence placement unless they have a current WWC.

#### Is my Working with children check current?

The WWC check remains current for 5 years, (unless revoked or surrendered prior), so most students will only need one WWC for the duration of their degree. Students must ensure that their WWC is current and apply for renewal prior to any placement the card is due to expire.

#### How do I apply for WWC Check?

- Students can obtain the WWC application form from any Australia Post Office or commence their application online.
- <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/applicants/how-to-apply>
- Students will need to provide documents to verify their identity either online or in person at an Australia Post outlet. WWC is a free process for volunteers.

#### What happens to my WWC Check information?

- Students must upload a copy of their WCC Card to InPlace and list the card number, check type and expiry date.
- If requested, the University will disclose the results of the WWC to the agency prior to the commencement of placement and will provide a photocopy if required.
- Information relating to the WWC and any photocopies will be stored in a secure location.
- The photocopy of the WWC will be destroyed when Deakin no longer has a legal obligation to retain it
- Students should ensure that they have a copy of their WWC card when attending placement

## NDIS Worker Screening Check

Agency's may request an [NDIS Workers Screening Check](#). If an NDIS Check is required for placement students will be required to pay the fee and clearance details must be uploaded to InPlace for verification.

## Aged Care Statutory Declaration

Aged Care providers may request students provide a Statutory Declaration.

If the Practice Education Team is unable to secure placement, because more than one agency deemed a student to be unsuitable or unsafe for placement, based on a disclosable outcome or outcomes, the student will be precluded from the course.

## Student Code of Conduct

All students undertaking placement will be required to sign and return the Deakin Occupation Therapy Student [Code of Conduct form](#) which can be found on Cloud.

## Immunisation

- The University expects that all students will be immunised prior to commencing placement.
- Students must complete and submit the [FOH Clinical Placement Vaccine Checklist](#) at the start of their first year of the course.
- The [Annual Influenza Vaccination Form](#) must be completed annually.
- Copies of both forms must be provided to the University prior to commencing placement.
- It is strongly recommended that students have the following immunisations:  
Hepatitis B, Influenza, Pertussis, Measles-mumps-rubella, Varicella, Tuberculosis, COVID 19.

Failure to present evidence of up-to-date immunisation may significantly limit student placement options.

Vaccination requirements may change and Deakin OT will keep students informed of any changes relating to vaccine requirements for placement. Students should always seek vaccination advice from their GP prior to placement.

The University [Medical Centres](#) located at the Waterfront and Waurm Ponds campuses are available for vaccinations and advice.

## COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on students, Universities and practice education placements. Whilst rules and restrictions relating to COVID-19 will continue to change rapidly students attending placement are reminded about the following:

- Students should not attend placement if feeling unwell or if they are identified as a close contact or secondary close contact
- If students feel unwell with COVID like symptoms they must COVID test and stay away from placement until a negative result or clearance is received
- Students are advised to alert their placement supervisor and DPEF immediately if they have potentially been exposed to COVID-19
- Students should not care for patients who are suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) during placement at any time

- Students on clinical placement should not be placed in high-risk COVID areas, which include areas which stream and/or treat confirmed/suspected cases of coronavirus

Up to date COVID 19 Information may be found <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/>

Students are advised to pay close attention to the Cloud site for their Unit and University communication to ensure they are aware of the current COVID-19 requirements.

## Placement Allocations

Students are not usually permitted to be allocated to placement at sites where they have links such as:

- They are currently working at the site or have done so in the past
- They have a relative or close friend working at the site
- They have a relative who is in receipt of services at the site
- The student is currently in receipt of services at the site or has been in the past

It is the student's responsibility to disclose such links to their Unit Chair and given this information, the practice education staff (Unit Chair, DPEF & PE) will decide if the practice education environment is appropriate for the student.

Students are not permitted to seek their own placement, as it is important that organisations are negotiating with a single university staff representative who is familiar with all of the associated policies and procedures. In addition, placement is assigned for each student based in part, on information gained from previous practice education experiences. The team aim to provide each student with a variety of specific learning experiences

All students will be given the opportunity to indicate their areas of interest for practice education prior to placement allocation. Students can provide this information via the InPlace system. The Practice Education Team, despite significant effort, will not always be able to place students close to home or in their field of interest. The team is limited by the offers received from agencies.

Students may seek work experience abroad, however, the time (although considered by the practice education staff as valuable) may not necessarily contribute to the students practice education hours.

Voluntary or paid work at an agency will not be counted as practice education hours.

## Practice education special circumstances application

The Practice Education team acknowledges that at times special circumstances may exist which affect a student's ability to participate in placement.

Students who may find it difficult to complete placement at a particular site or location may complete the special circumstances section within InPlace to inform the Practice Education Administrator for consideration.

Supporting documentation may be requested to support requests for special circumstances. Details regarding any special circumstances should be entered into the InPlace system as early as possible, to enable appropriate arrangements to be made.



## Practice education placement confirmation

- Confirmation of placement with the student will be made via the InPlace system.
- Please note, that it is also the students' responsibility to regularly check InPlace as changes to the dates or location of placement may occur due to circumstances outside of the Practice Education Teams control.

It is the student's responsibility to contact their Practice Educator (PE) a minimum of two-weeks prior to the commencement of placement to discuss the specific expectations and requirements regarding the particular placement. When students speak with their PE, they should confirm the placement address, date of commencement, starting time, dress code, pre-reading and other relevant information.

- Students are responsible for their own travel, accommodation and any associated costs when participating in placement. It is important to note that students will be required to undertake placement in a rural community at least once during the four-year program. Student accommodation may be required and the Practice Education Administration Officer may be able to assist with providing relevant information regarding potential accommodation options.

A [Pre-Placement Checklist](#) is available to assist students with planning for their placement

## International Placements

We currently have placement relationships with universities in India and Denmark.

At times there may be the opportunity for OT students to apply to complete **one** of their OT placements overseas. There is the maximum of one international OT placement permitted, given the Deakin OT course is preparing graduates to meet the APHRA competencies and to practice in the Australian context. Students who have attended one international placement can still apply for Deakin study tours, given study tours are not a component of the OT course curriculum.

## Uniform requirements

Every student is required to purchase a Deakin University polo shirt to wear during placement unless the PE has specifically stated that a uniform is not appropriate for the setting, for example, in some mental health facilities. Polo shirts can be purchased from the [Deakin University Shop](#).

If the PE requests that a uniform not be worn, the student should dress in appropriate professional clothing with thought given to the client population including, age, gender, culture and the duties the student will be required to perform. This generally means pants or skirt (below the knee) and tops of sufficient length so as not to reveal skin.

It is the student's responsibility to discuss the specific uniform requirements for each site with the relevant PE.

Students are advised to limit jewellery worn, as it can pose an occupational health and safety (OHS) risk. Appropriate footwear should be worn while on placement. This means supportive, enclosed, rubber soled footwear that minimises the risk of slips, trips or infection.

## Student emergency contact details

In the event of a student emergency during placement it is important that information regarding the students contact details and any relevant medical alerts are accessible and up to date on the InPlace system

A [Student Emergency Details](#) must be completed for each placement the student attends. Students should also provide their PE with a copy when placement commences.

## Health Issues or Disability

- It is the student's responsibility to disclose to their Unit Chair and/or DPEF and PE any health issues or disabilities that may affect their ability to perform a particular role or to expectation while on placement.
- The Occupational Therapy program regards student medical information as confidential and will not disclose information to your PE without permission.
- Students can see additional support and advice from the [Deakin Medical Centre](#)
- If a student identifies a health issue or disability that may impact their ability to perform to expectation on placement, they may be eligible for consideration of "Reasonable Adjustments" to placement. Students should contact the Disability Resource Centre, Division of Student Administration for further information. [Disability Resource Centre](#)
- If a student becomes unwell with an infectious disease (gastro, flu etc.) they may need a number of days away from placement, so as not to infect others. Please discuss any infectious illness or disease to your PE.

## Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Reporting

- It is the students responsibility to familiarise themselves with the agency's OHS Policies and Procedures during the orientation period.
- If a student is involved in, or witness's an incident during placement;
  - Inform the PE
  - Adhere to the agency's policies/procedures for reporting an incident

- Seek medical advice if necessary
  - Complete the agency's incident form
  - Inform the DPEF within one working day of the incident occurring
  - The DPEF may complete a DeakinSafe report on behalf of a student
- DeakinSafe is an online tool for reporting and managing hazards and incidents.
  - [Deakin Health and Safety consultants](#) can assist with any questions.
  - Staff and students can access the [DeakinSafe platform](#) and [related training resources](#) on DeakinHub using their Deakin log in credentials.

The DPEF and unit chair will advise the course coordinator if there is the potential for the incident to give rise to any insurance claims.

- The university has a duty of care to students whilst they are on placement. If an incident of personal injury, harassment, discrimination or sexual harassment occurs, the matter will be escalated by the university to the appropriate authority.
- The Unit Chair and Course Coordinator will be informed to ensure that the student is sufficiently supported throughout the relevant process.

## Insurance

The Deakin University insurance policies provide insurance cover for students during practice education.

A copy of the Certificate of Currency can be provided to agencies and Practice Educators on request to the Practice Education Administrative Officer.

Students are advised to discuss insurance coverage regarding driving the organisation's vehicles with their Practice Educator. Importantly, students are not permitted to transport clients in their own vehicles.

Please note - an incident or injury involving a student or patient that could potentially give rise to an insurance claim must be reported to the Unit Chair and Course Coordinator immediately as the University's insurer may deny liability claims if the incident has not been reported to the University.

## Pregnancy

General guidance for Australian workplaces is that employers can request medical clearance evidence from pregnant women wishing to work in the 6 weeks prior to their due date.

If you are pregnant and plan to participate in practice education in the 6 weeks prior to your due date, you may be asked to provide medical evidence that you are cleared to participate in practice education.

### Professional Behaviour

- Students are expected to adapt to agency norms, culture and expectations in regards to such things as presentation, communication, dress, workload, breaks and organisational responsibilities. In instances where students are unable to adapt due to cultural or religious reasons this will be negotiated prior to the placement.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, in accordance with the OT Australia Code of Ethics, which can be viewed on the OT Australia website, <http://www.ausot.com.au>. [Code of Ethics](#).
- Professional behaviour includes responsibility for one's own learning and students are required to undertake independent research to facilitate learning during practice education.

### Confidentiality

- All students must be aware of the specific legislative requirements pertaining to confidentiality such as the Health Records Act 2001, which allows individuals to exercise new rights and choices about how their personal and health information is handled. Some states in Australia also have privacy legislation (Office of the Privacy Commissioner 2009; Privacy Victoria 2008).

The DPEF can be of assistance with providing students with advice regarding the most appropriate way of presenting a client case study whilst preserving confidentiality. A minimum standard for case reports is that permission is obtained from the individual and all case reports (verbal or written) are de-identified.

- Confidentiality must also be maintained for information gained directly or indirectly from organisations regarding staff, projects, finances or other organisational business.
- Students are required to complete a [Confidentiality Agreement](#) for each placement and are required to give a copy to their PE. If the agency does not have a Confidentiality Agreement, a copy of one is available for students to use from Deakin.

### Examples of Confidentiality Breaches

- Accessing information that you do not need to know in order to do your job
- Unauthorised reading of a person's file
- Accessing information on family, friends or co-workers
- Reading the test results of family, friends or co-workers
- Talking about someone's personal information without their consent
- Discussing someone's details
- Talking about someone in a public place
- Telling a relative or friend about someone you have seen and identifying them
- Sharing, copying or changing information without authorisation
- Making unauthorised changes to a file
- Copying or forwarding information to a third party without written consent
- Copying examples of work containing confidential information
- Misuse of computer passwords
- Sharing your password so that a co-worker can access your work
- Using someone else's password

- Using a computer after someone else has logged in
- Leaving a secure information system unattended while logged on
- Disclosing information without following the agencies guidelines
- Disclosing details over the phone (eg: to an insurance agency, media representative or lawyer) without authorisation

## Consent Forms

- Any student completing a case study assignment about a consumer during placement is required to gain consent from the consumer.
- Consent must be documented using the appropriate Deakin OT [consent form](#), either via the consumers signature or a note initialled by the student indicating that verbal consent has been gained. (CBPE placement use a different Consent form).
- Verbal consent might be relevant in cases such as when telehealth is used or when a consumer is unable to sign the document.
- If an interpreter or other person such as a clinician supervisor is required to assist with the completion of the form, their details are to be included in the relevant section.
- At the completion of placement, the student will upload the signed Consent form to the Practice Education submission folder with their Practice Education Summary Form, SPEF-R2 & Placement Evaluation, in the PDF format currently required and destroy the original document.
- This file will be transported by the Professional Placement Officer to TRIM (the primary secure record storage system preferred by DU) and stored in the student's TRIM file.
- The consent form will not be uploaded with the assignment into the Assignment Dropbox, because this will identify the consumer to the marker/s.
- The form can be downloaded from the Practice Education site

## Practice Education Structure

Each placement experience involves different opportunities; however, the basic structure of each will remain the same. The basic practice education model includes:

- Practice Education Preparation Session
  - Facilitated by Unit Chair and/or DPEF on campus/online prior to the commencement of placement
- Student contacts PE
  - Student introduces self and discusses specific details prior to commencing placement
  - Student completes Pre-Placement Checklist
- Learning Plan
  - Student identifies learning needs, goals, activities and relevant outcome measures
- DPEF introductory liaison
  - Phone call, email contact with both student and PE
- Orientation to agency/organisation
  - Facilitated by PE
  - Student provides Student Emergency Details form to PE
  - Student completes a Confidentiality Agreement
  - Student completes placement orientation
- DPEF Liaison
  - May be a site visit, phone call, email or group meeting depending on need
- Mid-placement review of SPEF-R2
  - Facilitated by PE, discussed with student
- Final evaluation of SPEF-R2
  - Facilitated by PE, discussed with student
  - PE or student returns SPEF-R2 to Unit Chair
  - Student completes and returns the Deakin Practice Education Feedback Form
  - Student completes and returns the signed Practice Education Summary Form
  - Student completes practice education related assignment/s as per Unit Chair instructions
- DPEF Liaison
  - Debrief contact with DPEF for both student and PE
  - May be debrief tutorial, phone call or email depending on need

Increased DPEF contact may be required when the student, PE or DPEF identifies difficulties during placement or when the PE is not an occupational therapist.

## Recording placement hours

- It is the student's responsibility to record placement hours using the [Schedule on InPlace](#) and to complete a Practice Education Summary Form upon completion for signing by placement supervisor.
- The total hours for each day are calculated from starting and finishing times; that is, lunch and

tea breaks are included.

- If the student is participating in a camp where they are required to be on call throughout a 24hr period, the total camp hours are to be included.
- The reality of OT work rosters mean that some OTs will work weekends and/or am/pm shifts. In such circumstances, students will be asked to mirror their PE's work roster.
- Flexibility of hours may be possible in some circumstances if negotiated with and agreed by the student, PE and the DPEF. However, the site providing the placement has the final say regarding hours of attendance.
- The Practice Education Summary Form is to be signed by someone other than the student, who can verify that the student was participating in practice education related activities at the times recorded by the student on InPlace. This should primarily be the PE or DPEF.
- DPEF's facilitated tutorials and supervision sessions are counted as placement related hours and are therefore included on the Practice Education Summary Form and as part of the 90% attendance requirement.
- The Practice Education Summary Form is to be uploaded to InPlace (under Practice Education Documents) along with the Student Feedback Form and Student Practice Evaluation Form (SPEF) so the information can be saved to the student's file as a formal record of completed placement hours.
- **Students are advised to keep a copy of their Practice Education Summary Form** for their own records.
- Public holidays, ADOs and RDOs are not included unless they have been worked. If your placement falls on a Public Holiday, please check with your supervisor if you need to attend.
- Students are not expected to make up placement days missed due to public holidays although this may be negotiated between students and supervisors.

### Absenteeism

- If a student is absent from practice education, it is their responsibility to inform the PE no later than the expected start time and to inform their DPEF that same day.
- The student is expected to comply with the agency's policy and procedures regarding absences, including compassionate leave.
- If a student misses two or more days consecutively during practice education a Medical Certificate must be provided and uploaded to InPlace at the end of placement.
- If a student is absent for 10% or more of their placement, they must inform their DPEF and Unit Chair. If it is possible and appropriate, the opportunity for the student to make up time will be arranged.
- Students must not interrupt practice education for holiday leave or paid employment.
- If a placement day falls during Intra-Trimester break students are still required to attend placement.

### Practice Education Assignments

- Students are responsible for undertaking their own assignment/s or associated assessment tasks for each unit, as outlined in the unit guide.
- The PE may also set projects for students to complete while on placement. These projects will generally be of direct benefit to the site and take time precedence over University placement projects during placement hours.
- University-set practice education related work is an additional requirement to any work or projects that students are required to complete for the PE. Generally, it is expected that such university set work should be completed in the student's own time outside placement hours, unless negotiated with and agreed by the PE.
- At times it may be possible for students to expand on work that they are doing within a site as a basis for a University assessment task. Such relevant project links enhance the learning of the student while also adding value to the site where the work is taking place.

## Practice Education Assessment

- Students can expect to receive regular feedback from their PE; therefore, there should be no surprises regarding assessment outcomes at the end of placement for the student, PE or DPEF
- The *Student Placement Evaluation Form* (SPEF-R2), accompanied by the reference document, the *Student Placement Evaluation Handbook* (SPEH), has been adopted by all OT programs across Australia, including the Victorian OT programs
- One copy of the SPEF-R2 is made available to students in hard copy format prior to placement for self- evaluation. The PE will receive a link to the SPEF-R2 online system so that they can evaluate the student's performance during placement. The student will also receive log in details so that they can view their evaluation once it is completed. The SPEF is emailed to all PE's prior to placement commencement.
- If the PE chooses not to complete the SPEF-R2 online, they can print a copy of the SPEF-R2 from the introductory email sent by the DPEF or they can request a hard copy be sent via mail
- The PE will complete the student assessment at the midway point (unless otherwise indicated by the DPEF) and completion of the placement as outlined in the SPEF. The DPEF is available to the PE for consultation during this process if required
- From a practice education perspective the final SPEF-R2 assessment will be either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If a student receives a satisfactory pass for the placement the final grade for the unit will be determined by the other assessment tasks as stipulated in the unit guide
- If a student disagrees with the allocated unit grade then the standard appeal processes apply
- Students are required to upload the completed SPEF-R2, Practice Education Summary Form and Feedback form as combined document to the Unit Cloud dropbox using the naming convention below:  
200000000\_SURNAME\_HSO304\_PRACED  
Use your individual student ID and specific unit code

## Student difficulties during practice education

- Problems that arise during placement can often be resolved through communication and negotiation.
- The support of the DPEF for both the student and the PE is crucial to aiding early identification and subsequent resolution of problems.
- The DPEF will liaise with the Unit Chair should difficulties arise during placement.
- Difficulties that remain a problem at the mid-placement review, must be discussed with the student, PE and DPEF present. A [Concerns Exist Form](#) located in the SPEF-R2 (hard copy) or an email document concerns must be completed by the PE.
- When completed, the Concerns Exist Form must be forwarded to the DPEF and Unit Chair.
- When an issue is identified, management strategies will be collaboratively developed by the student, PE and DPEF. These will be documented. This provides the student with clear objectives and strategies for implementing change in order to enable them the opportunity to successfully complete placement. This process is closely monitored by the DPEF.
- It is important that students see such opportunities for negotiation and development of documented management strategies as valuable learning experiences, which will enhance their preparation for entering the professional work environment.



- Difficulties which arise during placement may relate to the following;
  - Poor communication between the student and the PE
  - A change of PE during placement
  - The students inability to manage tasks set by the PE
  - Mismatched expectations between the student and the PE
  - Differences between the PE and students preferred teaching and learning styles

In some instances an offer of an extended placement provides the opportunity for the student to have additional time in which they can reach the level of competency required.

### Withdrawal from practice education

- If there has been an incident or a prolonged legitimate absence which will impact on the student's ability to effectively meet learning goals, there is the opportunity for students to request from their Unit Chair a withdrawal from practice education without the grade being marked as a failure.
- The student may request withdrawal from practice education in circumstances including:
  - Breaches of occupational health and safety law at the practice education site
  - Medical grounds
- The PE and/or DPEF may request that a student be withdrawn from placement by the Unit Chair (which would usually result in a fail grade) in circumstances including:
  - Illegal behaviour
  - Unethical behaviour (breaching the Code of Ethics)
  - Gross negligence or misconduct
  - Consistent unsatisfactory performance after due instruction, guidance and mentoring
- The Unit Chair has the final responsibility for deciding whether a student will be withdrawn from placement.
- The Unit Chair and assessment panel for the unit have the final responsibility for allocating the unit grade and the specific circumstances surrounding placement withdrawal will be considered when doing so.
- Practice education placement will most likely need to be repeated at an appropriate time.

### Unsatisfactory completion of practice education

- The decision to determine that a student's performance is unsatisfactory is not an easy one.
- A student should never expect to reach the end of placement and be informed for the first time that they have not achieved a satisfactory level of performance.
- Students can expect to be advised during their practice education placement if their performance is unsatisfactory and given ample opportunity to liaise with their PE, DPEF and Unit Chair in order to develop and implement relevant performance management strategies.
- When it is recommended by the PE and the University that a student receives an unsatisfactory outcome for practice education placement, the standard University student appeal process applies.
- If a student fails a placement, it will need to be repeated at an appropriate time.

## Providing Feedback about your Placement

- Students are required to submit the [Student Practice Education Feedback Form](#) at the end of each placement. This document will provide feedback about the placement experience to the University only. Marks for your Unit will not be released until the Student Practice Education Feedback Form along with the SPEF-R2 and Practice Education Summary Form have been received.
- The SPEF-R2 contains a form called *The Student Review of Professional Practice Placement*. Students may be asked to complete this form by the PE and are expected to comply with this request

## Support Services for Students

There are a number of support services available to Deakin students:

- [Safer Community](#) – a free, confidential support service for those who experience concerning, threatening, inappropriate or uncomfortable behaviour.
- [Student Conduct](#)
- [Student Counselling](#) – Our experienced psychologists and social workers offer free and confidential counselling support for all students located in Australia.
- [Student Complaints](#) – we hope you find your time at uni to be enjoyable and rewarding however, if you're unhappy about something at Deakin, there are various ways you can let us know.
- [HDCOs](#) – Harassment and discrimination contact officers.
- [Disability Liaison Officer \(DLOs\)](#) - If disability, health, or mental health affects your studies and participation in university life our Disability Resource Centre can support you.
- [Health, wellbeing and safety](#) – access a range of services to help you stay health and safe – physically, mentally and spiritually.

## References

Office of the Privacy Commissioner. (2009). Office of the Privacy Commissioner, Sydney. Retrieved December 17, 2009, from <<http://www.privacy.gov.au/>>.

Privacy Victoria. (2008). Office of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner. Retrieved December 17, 2009, from <<http://www.privacy.vic.gov.au/>>.

World Federation of Occupational Therapists. (2002). Minimum standards for the education of occupational therapists. Forrestfield, WA: Auth