

**UNSW POLICY ON ENROLMENT AND PROGRESSION IN  
STUDENT PLACEMENT (INTERNSHIP)**

**RESOLVED AB04/40  
APPROVED AT ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING 4 MAY 2004**

That the Academic Board approves the UNSW Policy on Enrolment and Progression in Student Placement (Internship), as revised and detailed in the document presented.

***UNSW POLICY ON ENROLMENT AND PROGRESSION  
IN STUDENT PLACEMENT (INTERNSHIP)***

1. UNSW has undergraduate and postgraduate programs that include courses requiring participation in professional activities in organizations other than UNSW or in clinics and units at UNSW which offer professional services. The term 'placement' in this document refers to the UNSW/DEST category of 'field placement', and involves regular and planned supervision by university staff or a person approved by the university. It is differentiated from 'work experience', which involves little or no university supervision, instruction and assessment of the student.<sup>1</sup> Successful completion of a placement may be required for professional qualification. In this document, the term 'placement' will be used, although Schools may use terms such as 'internship', 'clinical assignment or allocation' and 'practicum'. The term 'organization' is used to cover any body that takes students on placement.
2. In relevant programs, students must be informed prior to enrolment that completion of placement is an essential requirement for completing a program and, as appropriate, for belonging to a professional body or obtaining a professional registration.
3. Placement aims to provide a high standard of professional education and supervision for students while interacting with people from relevant client or patient bases.
4. The student on placement is required to comply with standards of behaviour and codes of conduct appropriate to UNSW, the placement organization, and relevant professional codes of conduct. Students must be informed of the expectations of knowledge, behaviour and conduct in the placement guidelines or handouts issued by the placement coordinator.
5. UNSW has procedures and mechanisms in place to assist students on placement and they should be encouraged to use these as required. Many difficulties can be managed within the framework of placement as a learning experience.
6. The university recognizes the rights of students. It also has responsibilities to the organizations that offer placements, and to the relevant professions, clients, staff and others who may come into contact with students. The rights of the student are to be balanced with the university's obligations to all parties involved. Where there is a conflict in this regard it may be that obligations to another party take precedence over a student's ability to enrol in or complete a placement. In such cases, the student is entitled to procedural fairness, as are the staff of UNSW and organizations who work with students on placement, and the clients and patients of the organization.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.hecs.gov.au/manual/03/htm/guidelines/work\\_exp\\_industry.htm](http://www.hecs.gov.au/manual/03/htm/guidelines/work_exp_industry.htm)

7. Suitability for placement will be assessed on the basis of a School's requirements and the nature of the program in which a student is enrolled. In general terms 'unsuitability' will mean that the student is considered to be likely to act unprofessionally, act inappropriately, or offer a risk of harm to people with whom they may interact on placement, or otherwise be deemed unfit to practice in a professional manner.. Unsuitability may refer to a particular placement. It may also involve an inability to demonstrate required competency.
8. There may be times when students seek to withdraw from a placement because they feel unsuitable for or in conflict with the role that they are asked to take on. Where possible, the School will attempt to resolve any student difficulties on placement initially by negotiation.
9. A School or Faculty may decide not to allocate a student to a placement or may withdraw a student from placement in the light of information that indicates a student is unsuitable or unfit for placement. A School or Faculty may itself seek information to assist it to assess suitability for placement. If satisfied that there is a prima facie case for not allocating a placement or withdrawal from a placement, the Head of School or Dean of Faculty may suspend the placement or the allocation of a placement pending a final decision.
10. The matter of a student's suitability will first be assessed by the placement coordinator who will discuss the matter with the student and provide the student with all information pertinent to the matter. Support options may be explored. If the matter can be resolved by agreement then no further action will be needed under this policy
11. If there is disagreement as to the student's unsuitability for placement, the matter will be referred to the Head of School. The student will have the opportunity to be heard by the Head of School before a decision is made. If the Head of School decides that the student is unsuitable for placement, then the placement will not proceed or will terminate and the Head of School will notify the student and the DVC (Academic).
12. The student is entitled to proceed to an appeal against the Head of School's decision under the UNSW *Procedures for the Resolution of Student Grievances and Disputes*.
13. In special circumstances, a placement coordinator in conjunction with a program coordinator or Head of School may decide to withdraw a student from placement immediately, based on an assessment of the risk arising from the student continuing on the placement. The School will give the student reasons for that decision. If the student disputes the decision and the matter cannot be resolved by negotiation and discussion, the student is entitled to appeal against the decision under the UNSW grievance procedures.
14. An organization offering a placement may exercise its right to terminate a placement at any time. The placement coordinator will discuss the situation with the student .in order to assess options available to the School and the student.
15. In the event that a student is removed from a placement and such placement is a key component of the student's program of study, and if no other suitable placement can be offered, such removal from placement may be sufficient reason to begin the process of termination of the student from enrolment.
16. The University has the right to allocate students to particular placements in consultation with both the placement organisation and the student. Student preferences will be considered but may be overridden by other requirements of the University and the availability of suitable placements.
17. Students on placement remain bound by UNSW rules and regulations.