



Australia's  
Global  
University

# Placement Manual

Bachelor of Social Work (Honours)

## **Acknowledgement**

UNSW Australia's Kensington campus, on which the School of Social Sciences is housed, is built on the land of the Aboriginal people. We pay our respects to the Bedegal people of the Eora nation who are the Custodians of this land.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and pay respect to their unique values, and their continuing and enduring cultures which deepen and enrich the life of our nation and communities.

This Manual has been designed for students and agency based Field Educators (supervisors) of the Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) Programs, School of Social Sciences, Arts and Social Sciences, UNSW Australia. It contains information about Social Work Practice – Level 3 Placement (SOCW3012 and SOCW3013) and Social Work Practice – Level 4 Placement (SOCW4017 and SOCW4018), and policies pertaining to these subjects. It is intended to assist students and Field Educators in the planning and implementation of student practice learning.

## Table of Contents

1. Overview of Placements in the Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) Program .....	5
Objectives of Social Work Placements .....	5
Social Work Placement Policy .....	5
The Social Work Placement .....	6
Practice methods in placement .....	6
The Work Integrated Learning Unit .....	6
Roles and responsibilities in the Social Work Placement .....	7
The University .....	7
Students .....	8
Field Educators and Agencies .....	8
2. Prior to placement starting .....	10
Internal student checks .....	10
Progression rules .....	10
Exemption from a component of coursework Level 3 placement only .....	10
External student checks .....	10
National Criminal Record Check requirements and Working with Children’s Check .....	10
Vaccination and infection control .....	11
Negotiation and allocation of placement .....	11
Interviewing at prospective agencies .....	11
Situations where a student may not be allocated to an agency or a student may be withdrawn from an agency .....	11
3. Structure of social work placements .....	12
Field placement processes .....	12
Social Work Practice Level 3 Placement (SOCW3012 and SOCW3013) - Year 3, Term 1 and Term 2 .....	12
Social Work Practice Level 4 Placement (SOCW4017 and SOCW4018) - Year 4, Term 2 and Term 3 .....	12
Cultural Supervision .....	12
Rural, remote, interstate and international placements .....	13
Placement in places of employment .....	14
Agencies with internal application procedures .....	15
Variation of placement arrangements .....	15
Variation of placement dates .....	15
Student process for requesting a variation .....	15

Agency initiated variation in placement hours.....	15
4. Assessment in Field Education .....	16
The Mid Placement Liaison Visit.....	16
Mid and End Placement Reports .....	16
Student attendance requirements at placement.....	17
Accrual of time in lieu and placement attendance pattern .....	17
Intellectual property and confidentiality.....	18
Use of mobile phones and social media whilst on placement .....	18
5. Scholarships and awards .....	19
Brenda Smith Scholarship (Level 3 Placement) .....	19
The Sinja Kusljic Certificate of Merit in Field Education in Social Work (Level 3 Placement) .....	19
The Barry Bell Memorial Award for Excellence in Field Education Practice Learning (Level 4 Placement) .....	19
6. Occupational Health and Safety in the Social Work Placement.....	20
Occupational Health and Safety .....	20
Sexual Assault, Harassment & Misconduct .....	20
Insurance coverage for students on placement.....	20
Transport and travel to placement.....	21
7. The student experience in placement.....	22
Student self-care issues.....	22
Problems or concerns that arise in placement.....	22
Other University assistance .....	23
Appendix A. Placement Improvement Plan.....	24

# 1. Overview of Placements in the Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) Program

## Objectives of Social Work Placements

This course allows students to apply the theoretical and skills based learning in a practice setting. They are linked with a qualified social worker in a human services agency offering practice based learning, in accordance with the AASW Practice Standards. This learning experience is supported by social work supervision promoting critical reflection guiding students through a developmental process focusing on knowledge, skills and values relevant to the social work profession. The placement courses are Social Work Practice Level 3 Placement A and B (SOCW3012 – 12 units of credit and SOCW3013 – 6 units of credit) and Social Work Practice Level 4 Placement A and B (SOCW4017 – 6 units of credit and SOCW4018 – 12 units of credit). Both levels undertake 18 units of credit in total.

**These four compulsory courses in the Placement Strand are designed to:**

1. Enhance student understanding of the concepts, principles and techniques presented in the classroom, through application in practice situations;
2. Develop the ability to use knowledge, values and skills relevant to social work practice in a variety of problem solving tasks involving individuals, groups, organisations and communities;
3. Foster a sense of professional commitment to ethical and responsible practice behaviour;
4. Develop the ability to access service and community networks, and formulate critical analyses of existing welfare arrangements;
5. Promote skill and commitment in influencing welfare/organisational policy on behalf of service users;
6. Facilitate an awareness and respect for ethnic, cultural, sexual orientation and identity, and age differences in interactions with client and service systems;
7. Develop a sense of professional identity.

**Learning opportunities in the Social Work Placements are designed to enable a candidate for the BSW Degree to:**

- Approach practice tasks in ways that reflect a spirit of inquiry, a grasp of theoretical ideas relevant to different needs/problems and their socio-political context, an ability to transfer to specific situations and settings applicable concepts and skills, and readiness to seek knowledge required to guide professional activity;
- Act in accordance with social work values in different practice contexts;
- Display continuing responsibility for analysing practice activity and professional development;
- Reflect competence, responsibility and autonomy as a practitioner.

## Social Work Placement Policy

**It is the policy of the Social Work Placement courses:**

1. To uphold the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) Practice Standards (2013) and the minimum educational requirements for field placements. Specifically:
  - a) Students must complete a minimum of 980 hours of supervised instruction. We recommend students complete 70 x 7 hour days (not including lunch break) across placements A and B.
  - b) Supervision is provided by a Field Educator who is eligible for membership of the AASW and has at least 2 years' practice experience.
  - c) Students engage in social work learning experiences which address a range of methods of social work intervention including direct and indirect practice.
  - d) Students are not normally placed in agencies where they have been in paid employment or given continuous voluntary service, except under certain conditions (detailed later).
2. All students are expected to begin placement at times and dates specified.

3. Students are not to negotiate their own placement. Students are encouraged to offer suggestions of placements for the general student pool.
4. A formal record of placement is maintained for each student. Access to this record is restricted to staff associated with Work Integrated Learning.
5. Students, field educators and their agencies are supported by the Work Integrated Learning Unit and academic staff through Seminars, Mid Placement Liaison Visits, workshops, courses and additional consultation when necessary.
6. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the Work Integrated Learning Unit of any personal history or current issues such as physical, psychological and behavioural issues, and specific triggers that might impact on their learning experience in a field placement. Specific needs of students are taken into consideration when allocating placements.
7. Students who are close friends or associates will not be placed in the same agency except under exceptional circumstances.
8. Students are not placed in agencies where they have had personal ties or experiences as a client or relative of a client, or have a significant prior relationship with a staff person.
9. Students are placed with different colleagues and Field Educators in each of their placements.

## The Social Work Placement

A Social Work Placement involves a student being assigned to a Field Educator in a social welfare, health or community service agency for a specified period of time. In this time, they will be expected to undertake work considered appropriate both by the agency and the University. The Field Educator allocates and supervises the work undertaken by the student and provides a supportive environment in which the student can acquire the knowledge, skills and values appropriate to social work practice.

### Practice methods in placement

The following recommendations are made in light of the core professional interpersonal skills required of all students whatever method of practice they utilise in their future work.

- Over the course of the Level 3 and Level 4 placements, each student should have experience in micro work i.e. with individual clients via casework, case management or counselling.
- Over the course of the Level 3 and Level 4 placements, each student should have experience in macro work such as community development, research and policy focused work.
- Over the course of the Level 3 and Level 4 placements, group work alone does not constitute enough direct practice experience. One placement must have a significant case work component to satisfy this criterion.

Placements are undertaken by students in the BSW program as separate courses with a Satisfactory/Fail grading. The University provides performance assessment criteria (based on practice standards formulated by the AASW), which prescribe what students are expected to learn and should be able to do in each placement. These assessment criteria are the basis for evaluation of each student's performance.

## The Work Integrated Learning Unit

Prior to each placement, students will communicate with relevant university Work Integrated Learning Unit staff to plan and prepare for the placement. The roles are:

### **Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work)**

The Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) maintains the overall integrity of the Work Integrated Learning strand of the Bachelor of Social Work (Hons) program. They liaise with other universities as well as health and welfare organisations. The Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) makes decisions in relation to the overall development and co-ordination of the placement courses. This includes a lead role in managing placement difficulties. The Senior WIL Placement Officer also oversees training of Field Educators and management of Liaison Tutors.

- **WIL Administrator (Social Work)**

Coordinates the preparation of the placement including: liaising with both field educators and students in the negotiation of placements; assessing students' individual learning needs prior to placement; allocating students and Liaison Tutors to agencies for placement.

- **Course Convener /** Teaches Integrative Seminars and assesses student class work. Consults with the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) about student progression, and other matters relating to the student experience in their field education opportunity. The Course Convener is responsible for entering and awarding of final grades for the students.
- **Liaison Tutor**  
Provides support and consultation to student and field educator during the placement, reporting to the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work). The Liaison Tutor coordinates contact with both parties early in the placement, conducts the formal Mid Placement Liaison Visit to assess student progress and works with both parties in consultation with the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) to resolve any difficulties that may arise.
- **External Supervisor**  
Provides regular clinical supervision to students during the placement, reporting to the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work). The External Supervisor consults with the Field Educator and Liaison Tutor as required during the placement and contributes to the formative and summative assessment of the placement.
- **Work Integrated Learning Administrative Assistants**  
Provide administrative assistance in the systems and processes of placements and internships in the School of Social Sciences, including administrative support to Staff in the Work Integrated Learning Unit, Field Educators, Students and Liaison Tutors.

## Roles and responsibilities in the Social Work Placement

An excellent social work placement rests on effective collaboration between Student, Field Educators and the University. The responsibilities of each party are as follows:

### The University

1. Arranges social work placements in agencies and community groups;
2. Ensures, within the resources available, as wide a variety of placements as possible;
3. Consults agencies, field educators and students about educational and practice needs and standards in field placement;
4. Where necessary supports field educators in relation to their employing organisations and student social work practice;
5. Keeps organisations informed of placement opportunities required and the policies and practices related to social work placement; and where possible provides opportunities for agencies to discuss their role in the education and training of students;
6. Ensures that each placement has university insurance coverage and that each student holds a valid National Police Clearance, Working With Children Check and NSW Health Vaccination Compliance prior to starting placement;
7. Ensures that students are aware of agency specific vaccination requirements for clinical placements;
8. Provides students with opportunities to clarify their learning goals, interests and required adjustments prior to each placement;
9. Sets the learning objectives for each placement;
10. Provides clear guidelines for the planning, management and evaluation of each placement course;
11. Informs Field Educators of current Social Work Program content;
12. Arranges for Liaison Tutors to undertake Mid Placement Liaison Visits to Field Educators and Students during placement;
13. Provides consultation and support to Students, Field Educators, and Liaison Tutors when requested during placement;
14. Provides regular opportunities for training in supervision;
15. Awards the final Satisfactory/Fail grade to students in each placement.

## Students

### Before the placement students will:

1. Participate in pre-placement planning arrangements as specified by the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work);
2. Ensure that course pre-requisites are completed;
3. Complete all required documentation as specified by the Work Integrated Learning Unit;
4. Formally disclose any personal history or current issues such as physical, psychological and behavioural issues, and specific triggers that might impact on their learning experience in a field placement;
5. Make contact with the agency once they have been asked to do so;
6. Respond to communications from the university concerning the placement;
7. Complete enrolment in the course before commencing placement;

### During the placement students will:

1. Conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for a student in a professional setting and in accordance with the AASW Practice Standards and the University's Code of Conduct which is provided in the Course Outline.
2. Communicate effectively and promptly about the placement progress and advise the Field Educator, Liaison Tutor and Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) immediately of any concern regarding their safety or wellbeing during the placement;
3. Comply with all rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the placement agency, including dress code and punctuality;
4. Maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality in relation to their placement experiences and any information they are made privy to;
5. Inform the Field Educator, Liaison Tutor and Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) promptly of any absences;
6. Provide any required documentation relating to the absence.

### In relation to learning on placement students will:

1. Attend placement for the required number of days;
2. Attend compulsory university based Integration Seminars and complete associated tasks;
3. Demonstrate a commitment to learning by being actively involved in placement tasks, activities and supervision;
4. Undertake tasks appropriate to the agency and the goals of the placement;
5. Prepare a Learning Contract in consultation with the Field Educator and course guidelines;
6. Inform university Work Integrated Learning Unit staff of any difficulties in the negotiation of the contract, fulfilment of expectations, or other aspects of the placement;
7. Prepare for the Mid Placement Liaison Visit in consultation with the Field Educator;
8. Participate in the Mid Placement Liaison Visit and any additional visits deemed necessary to assess progress during the placement;
9. Participate in the process of evaluation of their learning and the preparation of the Mid and End Placement Reports;
10. Complete satisfactory quality written work including the Learning Contract, Mid and End Placement Reports;
11. Inform the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) if intending to withdraw from placement.

### Field Educators and Agencies

1. Recognise placement teaching as an integral part of the Field Educator's workload;
2. Offer space, facilities and travel costs for work undertaken by students in the placement;
3. Participate in pre-placement planning, and orientation sessions for the placement;
4. Identify suitable tasks for student's level of placement and design an appropriate learning program in consultation with student(s);



5. Locate relevant educational opportunities in the agency setting;
6. Provide the equivalent of at least one hour per week of formal (planned teaching time) supervision with students under their supervision;
7. Inform university Work Integrated Learning Unit staff of any difficulties that arise in the placement in a timely manner;
8. Assess the student's performance in accordance with the Social Work Program's procedures for placement,
9. Provide ongoing feedback to the student,
10. Complete the Learning Contract, Mid and End Placement Reports by the due dates,
11. Contribute to the Mid Placement Liaison Visit,
12. Where possible, attend seminars on student supervision and field education,
13. Discuss with university Work Integrated Learning Unit staff any proposed variation in placement dates/arrangements;
14. Notify and negotiate with the university as soon as possible if the Field Educator intends to be away during the placement;
15. Replace the Field Educator in the event of illness or inability to continue the placement;
16. Attend additional Placement Liaison Visits and/or special meetings in instances of student difficulties or university appeal;
17. Be willing to provide opportunities and affirmative action for students with differing needs for educational support and supervision;
18. Advise students on Work Health and Safety Policies and Procedures currently in place in their agencies;
19. Inform the University of agency policies relevant to the student placement;  
Recommend a final grade on the Mid and End Placement Reports.

## 2. Prior to placement starting

### Internal student checks

#### Progression rules

Students enrolling in Level 3 or Level 4 Placement are required to meet the pre-requisites and co-requisites of these courses. The progression rules outlining the relationship between Social Work Placement and other Social Work Program courses are available in the Social Work Undergraduate Handbook <http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au>. Queries on this matter are to be addressed to the FAS Student Advisors and the BSW (Hons) Program Convener who will consult where necessary with the Senior WIL Placement Officer.

#### Exemption from a component of coursework Level 3 placement only

Students may apply for exemption from a component of coursework for SOCW3012 and/or SOCW3013. Only formal work experience, tasks and duties in line with social work roles, tasks and functions will be considered when granting an exemption for a component of coursework. A minimum of three full-time equivalent years' practice in a relevant context in the previous seven years is required AND at least one year of full-time equivalent must have been in the last three years. Equivalent years' practice must be in a relevant context, using social work practice skills such as assessment and counselling and methods such as case work or community work. The minimum expectation for a 'relevant context' is that it includes an organisational context and similar kinds of professional work experience that correspond to what would be expected of a first placement student. The student must develop and submit a portfolio demonstrating the practice standards and the integration of theory and practice, social work ethics and values. External, independent verification/reference as to accuracy of student's claims is required.

If an exemption is granted, the following conditions apply for the second field placement. The meeting of these conditions must be considered prior to the granting of an exemption for component of coursework in SOCW3012 and/or SOCW3013:

- 1) The second placement must be undertaken in an Australian setting where the student can gain extensive experience with human services agency clients and practice case work, group work or community practice skills. The prime focus of the placement cannot be policy or research.
- 2) Strong preference is for on-site supervision unless in a remote setting where no other placement is available and high-quality external supervision is provided.
- 3) The placement setting must be different to settings in the student's work history and any experience on which the Exemption for Component of Coursework in SOCW3012 and SOCW3013 was based.

Students will provide an Exemption for Component of Coursework Application, accompanied by a portfolio which should include for example, job descriptions accompanied by referee reports; skills assessment and critical reflection on placement or work experience to be assessed.

Please contact the WIL Unit if you believe you may be eligible for exemption from a component of coursework.

### External student checks

#### National Criminal Record Check requirements and Working with Children's Check

Students are required to produce a valid National Criminal Record Check prior to starting each placement. It is a condition of university insurance coverage that this check is sighted by staff of the Work Integrated Learning Unit before the student can begin. The student must apply online and provide proof of identity so they can receive a National Criminal Record Check Certificate. It is the student's responsibility to inform staff in the Work Integrated Learning Unit about any Disclosable Outcomes on their National Criminal Record Check and to engage in a risk management process with their potential placement organisation/s. As the University has a duty of care to both agencies and members of the public, it is compulsory for all students to undergo this process, including international students undertaking field placement. It is the responsibility of each student to inform the Work Integrated Learning Unit when their criminal status changes during their candidature.

All students must also produce a Working with Children's Check number. It is the responsibility of the agency to verify their allocated student's Working with Children's Check status on the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian website.

Agencies are also to advise students of and conduct any additional checks they require. Any student who has concerns about these processes should consult with the Work Integrated Learning Unit.

### **Vaccination and infection control**

A student who undertakes placement in a NSW Health funded facility must be verified by a NSW Health staff member and registered with the ClinConnect system. All students are to provide evidence of compliance with screening and vaccination schedules, regardless of their placement preferences, unless they have conscientious objections to vaccines or are physically unable to receive vaccinations. Please see the NSW Health circular, which can be accessed at [http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/careers/student\\_clearance/pages/default.aspx](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/careers/student_clearance/pages/default.aspx)

## **Negotiation and allocation of placement**

Placements are negotiated by university Work Integrated Learning staff, primarily the WIL Administrator and the Senior WIL Placement Officer. Staff members negotiate as wide a range of placement opportunities as possible with agencies and Field Educators interested in participating in field education. They also assist Field Educators to decide on the most appropriate work and level of students suited to the placement offered. Students who have suggestions of potential placements may notify WIL staff who will explore these opportunities. However, students are not to negotiate their own placements. Although students may have a stated specific interest in a placement identified by this process, any formal placement offers made will be placed in the general pool for consideration of all students. In exceptional circumstances, as determined by Work Integrated Learning staff in consultation with students, placement negotiation will be carried out on an individual basis.

### **Interviewing at prospective agencies**

In order for a placement to be confirmed a student needs to interview at the prospective agency and be accepted for the placement by the agency. If a student is not successful in their first interview at a prospective agency, the circumstances, including mitigating factors, are considered prior to the Work Integrated Learning Unit making a second attempt to locate a suitable placement alternative. If the student is unsuccessful in their second interview, while mitigating circumstances may again be taken into account, consideration of the student's eligibility to continue in the current social work placement level will also occur. Feedback regarding unsuccessful interviews will always be communicated to the student as soon as possible.

### **Situations where a student may not be allocated to an agency or a student may be withdrawn from an agency**

The University acknowledges the rights of students and its responsibility to them as consumers of educational services. It also recognises the rights of and its responsibilities to placement stakeholders including members of the social work profession, organisations and staff members that offer placements, clients receiving the social work service, and others. Recognition of the rights of the student will be balanced with the University's obligations to all parties involved. Where there is a conflict of interest in this regard it may be that obligations to another party will override the rights of the student as a consumer of education.

If the Work Integrated Learning Unit receives information that indicates that a student may be behaving unprofessionally or acting inappropriately, or that there may be a risk of harm to any party, including the student, the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) may decide not to allocate a student to an agency, or may withdraw a student from an agency during the placement.

## 3. Structure of social work placements

### Field placement processes

The university consults concurrently with students about their particular interests and specific learning goals and with human service agencies about their essential criteria and intended projects. The student is then matched by university staff to a human services agency, taking into consideration the special learning needs of each student and the requirements for field education established by the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW). The Student then visits the agency with the aim of meeting the proposed Field Educator and gaining an understanding of the agency where they will be placed and the possible student tasks available to them. Feedback is then sought from both the Student and the Field Educator before the placement is confirmed. By the end of the Level 3 placement, students are required to have demonstrated a beginning level of competence in an identified range of practice areas. Performance is monitored and assessed by the University, in consultation with the Field Educator and Student. Building on their Level 3 Placement experience, Level 4 students are placed in a different human services agency to develop additional skills and knowledge and further enhance those already mastered at a beginner's level. By the end of the Level 4 placement, students need to demonstrate competence to the level of a beginning graduate in the full range of required practice areas.

#### **Social Work Practice Level 3 Placement (SOCW3012 and SOCW3013) - Year 3, Term 1 and Term 2**

490 hours (47 x 7 hour days in Term 1 and 23 x 7 hour days in Term 2) plus university-based integration seminars throughout the placement. Placement pattern is 4 days per week (Mon-Thurs) in the agency from February to early June. Students undertake a co-requisite (Honours) Component with attendance at University required throughout Terms 1 and 2.

#### **Social Work Practice Level 4 Placement (SOCW4017 and SOCW4018) - Year 4, Term 2 and Term 3**

490 hours (23 x 7 hour days in Term 2 and 47 x 7 hour days in Term 3) plus university based integration seminars throughout the duration of the placement. Placement pattern is 4 days per week in the agency from mid-July to November. Students undertake a co-requisite (Honours) Component with attendance at University required throughout Terms 2 and 3.

#### **External Supervision**

External Supervision occurs when the University provides intensive support for social work students whose day to day supervisor is not a social worker (or whose qualifications are not yet recognised by the AASW). External Supervision is provided fortnightly in a group setting. External supervisors also provide individual supervision to students at key points during the experience and prepare a paragraph about the students' performance to insert into the end placement report. Supervision may be provided remotely. The UNSW External Supervisor is in regular contact with the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) and the Field Education Officer, as well as the relevant Liaison Tutor who monitors the student's progress at the agency.

External Supervision is intended to complement and not replace the regular 1.5 hour per week supervision students receive in their placement agency. Attendance at external supervision is mandatory and ensures that the student experience meets AASW placement standards. The hours dedicated to External Supervision accrue towards the minimum number of hours in placement. Students may also accrue travel time to and from external supervision. Attendance at external supervision is to be supported by field agencies and students are expected to continue to their placement after supervision (unless otherwise negotiated and stipulated in the Learning Contract).

#### **Cultural Supervision**

Students who have identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander are eligible for additional Cultural Supervision provided by a UNSW academic Aboriginal staff member. This supervision is provided either by phone, on campus or other relevant site as required. Students who choose to access cultural supervision are responsible for informing their field agencies of their attendance times to ensure placement agency requirements are honoured. Cultural supervision is also supported by UNSW and reinforced within the Field Educator Training Seminar.

## **Rural, remote, interstate and international placements**

Due to concurrent classroom courses it is not possible to allocate students who are undertaking the Level 3 Placement to remote locations. However, Greater Sydney areas such as Newcastle, Gosford, the Blue Mountains and Wollongong placement locations will be considered.

### **Placement in rural and remote areas of NSW**

Depending on the resources of the Social Work Program, students are permitted to undertake Level 4 Placement in rural and remote areas of NSW. These placements are subject to eligibility criteria and an EOI process. The specific match is organised by Work Integrated Learning unit staff in consultation with the student. Students are expected to undertake a pre-placement interview, which may take place remotely, before the placement is confirmed.

### **Interstate placements**

Occasionally, if students are going to move interstate upon graduation, a Level 4 Placement may be arranged through a university in that state. However, the Work Integrated Learning Unit remains mindful that other states have a priority to locate placements for their own students. Students should alert the Field Education Officer early in Term 2 of the preceding year if they are considering undertaking a rural, regional or interstate placement.

### **Overseas placements**

Students are also permitted to undertake SOCW4017 & SOCW4018, Level 4 Placement A and B overseas. UNSW has regulations that the Unit complies with in organising overseas placements. The Work Integrated Learning Unit is required to work with institutions to establish formal agreements prior to sending placement students to an overseas location. Currently, an agreement exists with the University of Stockholm in Sweden and Ulster University in Northern Ireland which are currently under review for 2020-2021. Students are not permitted to negotiate their own international placement.

### **Expressions of Interest for rural, remote and overseas placements**

When assessing a student's expression of interest in a rural, remote, interstate or international placement the Work Integrated Learning Unit will seek information about whether:

1. Level 3 placement was completed without any concerns in performance having been identified;
2. The Level 3 placement was completed locally;
3. The student has an approximate credit average WAM in classroom based practice courses;
4. Academic and Work Integrated Learning Unit staff are confident that the student can successfully undertake the potential placement and conduct themselves in a mature and professional manner.

The Senior Work WIL Placement Officer will communicate with the student to confirm the student's eligibility based on the above expectations, and on the quality of the Expression of Interest (see below for more detail).

In all cases students bear the costs associated with rural, remote, interstate and international placements including travel, insurance, accommodation and other expenses or levies. Students may apply for Scholarships and Bursaries at their own discretion by going to <http://www.scholarships.unsw.edu.au/> and <https://www.heti.nsw.gov.au/Placements-Scholarships-Grants/scholarships-and-grants>. A rural/remote resource website is <http://sarah.org.au/#>

Students must have a valid travel insurance policy for rural, remote, interstate and international placements that provides appropriate cover for illness and misadventure.

Students who undertake rural, remote and overseas placements will usually enrol in SOCW4015 or SOCW4016 and SOCW4017 and SOCW4018 and pay the required fees for these courses.

### **Procedure for rural, remote, interstate and international placements**

Rural, remote, interstate and international placements require a longer lead time than normal placements to organise. Students must submit an expression of interest and meet benchmarks to be eligible for these placements.

Students with an interest in an international placement will be invited to a briefing seminar and will follow the procedures of the UNSW Study Abroad & Student Exchange Office in October of the year prior to their Level 4 placement. They must apply to indicate their intention to undertake an International Placement as an Outbound Exchange Student via Moodle. There is a cost to this application which is non-refundable. Students will also need to submit to the WIL team an EOI in November of the year prior to their Level 4 placement.

Students with an interest in a rural, remote or regional placement will be invited to a briefing seminar and must submit to the WIL team an EOI in November of the year prior to their Level 4 placement.

Their EOI must include:

- A rationale as to the educational benefits of undertaking a placement overseas, or remotely;
- Discussion of resilience factors and challenges that may be anticipated in the context;

A copy of the student's Level 3 End Placement Report and the student's academic transcript will be accessed and reviewed by the Work Integrated Learning Unit when their application is considered. The student will be notified about the outcome of their application by the Senior WIL Placement Officer.

When undertaking an Interstate, Rural, Remote or International Placement students are representing this university and therefore must be conscious of appropriate professional behaviour including awareness of cultural differences. In negotiating these placements, the student's learning needs and interests are communicated to the host agency or university and a placement is negotiated based on the range of appropriate learning opportunities available through the host institution.

## Placement in places of employment

Placements are not usually undertaken in an agency or organisation in which the student is employed, in line with Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards (ASWEAS), (AASW, 2013). However, as per the ASWEAS guidelines exceptions can be made if the Course Convenor is satisfied that the educational goals of the placement can be achieved in the workplace and that the role of the Social Work program in assessing the student's performance is not jeopardised. Criteria for workplace based placement (WBP) include:

- The student must be allocated tasks different from those they usually undertake;
- The placement must be supervised by a Field Educator who is a qualified social worker who is not the student's usual supervisor;
- For the most part the colleagues are not the student's usual work colleagues;
- Where possible the physical location of the placement should be different to the student's usual employment location.

Students interested in workplace-based field placement are encouraged to identify this at the time of their placement interview with the WIL Unit. Students will then be required to apply and obtain approval from the Course Convenor as early as possible before the commencement date of the placement. They will be asked to complete the Work-Based Placement Agreement and liaise with all stakeholders to understand and minimise conflicts of interest.

## Agencies with internal application procedures

At times, agencies require students to apply through internal agency procedures prior to accepting them for placement. These could involve students being required to send in their resumes or to provide a rationale for their placement request. In these situations, students will firstly have to be accepted by the agency before they can apply for it to be considered as their field placement. The university's decision as to whether this can be confirmed as a field placement will be determined by:

- Whether the agency can provide appropriate student learning tasks.
- Whether the agency can provide appropriate student supervision.
- Whether the students learning needs can be addressed by this agency.
- Whether the agency can adhere to the University requirements for field placement assessment.

Some agencies also have their own compliance application process which will need to be successfully completed in addition to the university process in order to undertake placement with these agencies.

## Variation of placement arrangements

### Variation of placement dates

Field placements are integrated with the rest of the BSW ((Honours)) program, in accordance with pre-requisite and co-requisite requirements detailed in the Social Work Undergraduate Handbook. Variations to the set pattern can therefore only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Students requesting variations will be considered by the WIL Administrator and the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work). The following factors need to be considered by the Work Integrated Learning Unit in reaching a decision to approve a variation of placement dates.

- Reason for request
- Implications for university requirements
- Resource implications for university staff and agency staff
- Placement tasks and supervision needs

### Student process for requesting a variation

Students can request a variation by completing a "Request for Variation of Placement Form" and submitting it to the Work Integrated Learning Unit.

The decision will be conveyed to the student in writing after all the above have been considered.

### Agency initiated variation in placement hours

From time to time agencies request alterations to the placement start or finish date. The student will be consulted before a decision is made about such requests. In all cases the overarching consideration is the viability of the placement and the likelihood that the request can facilitate the student's successful and timely completion of placement.

## 4. Assessment in Field Education

Assessment is ongoing in the placement and draws upon the AASW Practice Standards (2013). A formal assessment of the student's performance is made both at the mid and end points of the placement. The final grade may be Satisfactory (SY) or Fail (FL) and is determined by the Course Convenor on completion of the placement, based on whether placement performance criteria based on the AASW Practice Standards (2013) have been met. In reaching their decision, the Course Convenor consults with the student concerned, and the Senior WIL Placement Officer, who aids consultation with the Field Educator, the UNSW External Supervisor (where allocated) and the Liaison Tutor. As with all other courses, placement results are reviewed by the School Assessment Committee before being transmitted to the university administration.

### The Mid Placement Liaison Visit

The Senior WIL Placement Officer is responsible for ensuring that each placement is allocated a Liaison Tutor and that Liaison Tutors liaise with both Student/s and Field Educator/s during the placement. The Liaison Tutor conducts individual discussions, telephone contacts, email contacts, and a placement visit, and integrates their support with the regular Placement Integration Seminars. All students are visited at least once by the Liaison Tutor during the placement and may be visited more if required by either or both parties. The purpose of the mid-placement liaison visit is to:

- Enhance communication between the university and the agency
- Review learning in the placement
- Explore ways of expanding and consolidating this learning
- Contribute to the ongoing assessment of the placement
- Assist with difficulties arising in the placement

The topics students are expected to present on in the Mid Placement Liaison Visit are addressed in the Course Outline. Students are expected to refer to the section in the Course Outline on the structure and preparation required for the visit and consult with their Field Educator and Liaison Tutor in preparing for the visit. Field educators and students may request an early visit or an additional consultation to discuss matters of concern as they arise in the placement. A brief report of topics discussed and courses of action recommended is written at the end of each visit, signed by all parties and uploaded to Moodle by the student when received from the Liaison Tutor.

### Mid and End Placement Reports

In all placements, Students are asked to prepare and submit written Mid and End Placement Reports in consultation with Field Educators that address their individual student performance. These reports are expected to be a collaborative effort between the Student and Field Educator with reference to the Learning Contract, the Assessment Criteria in the Mid and End Placement Reports and the objectives provided in the Course Outline. If the student disagrees with the Field Educator's comments they should raise this with their Liaison Tutor. They may also state this in their response to the Field Educators comments. Students may apply to the Senior WIL Placement Officer via the Liaison Tutor to write a separate document if they so wish. Each report is a confidential written communication between the Field Educator, the Student, the Liaison Tutor and the University. Reports are read only by university staff and field educators involved in the current and subsequent placement. It is not intended to be used as a placement or job reference. All such reports must be submitted to the Work Integrated Learning Unit at the appropriate milestone. Each completed Mid and End Placement Report includes a recommended grade of the student's performance by the Field Educator indicating whether it is 'satisfactory' or 'fail'. The Course Convenor assigns the final grade for the placement by taking into consideration the recommended grade by the Field Educator and the Mid Placement Liaison Visit Report by the Liaison Tutor.

For the Level 4 Placement, a copy of the student's Level 3 End Placement Report is usually forwarded to the next Field Educator to assist in setting placement goals and negotiating the Learning Contract. If a student has a concern about the forwarding of the End Placement Report to the next placement, this should be discussed with the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work).

The final assessment of a student's performance in placement may follow three paths:

1. A student's performance may be assessed to be 'Satisfactory' (SY).
2. A student may be given a 'withheld' result. This decision is implemented when the student has made progress but there is uncertainty about the adequacy of performance in a specific area(s). A student's



placement may be extended in their current organisation or an alternative organisation may be identified if more appropriate. Any extension or re-allocation of a placement is regarded as 'supplementary' work to resolve doubt about the student's performance, or to provide consolidation of recent learning.

3. A student's performance may be assessed to be a 'Fail' (FL). Where a fail grade is allocated a student is required to formulate a plan to address the issues identified and enrol with the University to undertake a repeat placement in a different agency with new learning goals. A debriefing with the Course Convenor and Senior WIL officer will be arranged to discuss the grade outcome and to plan supportively prior to a new placement being undertaken in the next viable placement window.

## Student attendance requirements at placement

Students are to complete the minimum number of hours in each placement. In some rare instances, students may need to make up lost time due to illness or misadventure. To satisfy the AASW requirements for field placement the student is expected to make up all the hours they are absent, regardless of the reason. However, when an offer to take a student is made, it is on the understanding that the placement will finish on the scheduled date. Therefore, there are limits on the ability of agencies and Field Educators to accommodate extensions. Should an unforeseen situation arise, placement dates will be re-negotiated with Field Educators as soon as possible. If a student's absence is likely to be lengthy, this may affect the viability of the placement and should be discussed with the Field Educator and the Senior WIL Placement Officer as soon as possible.

### Accrual of time in lieu and placement attendance pattern

At some placements students accrue hours more quickly. This may be due to out-of-hours projects, one-off or rare emergency situations or the regular accrual of more than the recommended daily number of hours. The approach to time-in-lieu should be established at the beginning of placement and described in the Learning Contract. In order to maximise self-care and student learning, UNSW recommends that students arrange to take time in lieu as soon as possible following the accrual of additional hours (one hour worked equals one-hour time-in-lieu).

Alternatively, if students accrue hours more quickly, the Social Work Placement may be completed up to one week early (day 66), but not more than this. *Student learning and wellbeing can be compromised by regular accrual of time-in-lieu, and accumulating hours to complete placement more than one week early is not permitted.*

Half days or less hours attendance at placement do not count as full days unless related to taking time in lieu after accruing additional hours. Regular half days will not be accepted as full placement days unless it is part of an approved variation of placement due to special needs. Students are responsible for informing the Senior WIL Placement Officer via email if assessment dates and/or end day of placement will be affected by accruing hours more quickly and the student is not taking time in lieu immediately.

Upon the accrual of time-in-lieu, the Field Educator should verify the timesheet and assist the student to plan how to take the time-in-lieu. The student should ensure the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) and Liaison Tutor is kept informed about time-in-lieu accrued and approval has been given.

Students attending placement 7 hours per day will finish placement as planned in 70 days. Sometimes agencies might request students to attend placement 7.5 hours per day in order to participate in certain meetings. In this case students will finish placement in 66 days. It is not recommended that student attend placement more than 7.5 hours/day. Students are responsible for informing WIL staff of any changes to the usual 7 hours/day attendance and ensure that approval has been given by the Senior WIL Placement Officer.

It is not recommended that students attend placement during placement break unless approval has been provided. We encourage all students to take a break and maximise self-care during this time. Students can contact the Senior WIL Placement Officer to discuss their options if needed. The student will need to discuss their request prior with the Field Educator and Liaison Tutor involved and receive their support. Requests will only be considered 3 weeks before the break unless it is part of an approved variation of placement due to special needs.

## Intellectual property and confidentiality

About intellectual property, students should be aware that:

Human service agencies make placements available to social work students on condition that the agency has a claim to the intellectual property created by the student where the intellectual property:

- a. has been created utilising substantial resources of the Agency;
- b. is created because of pre-existing Intellectual Property owned by the Agency;
- c. has been created by a team of the Agency, of which the student is a member; or
- d. has been created because of funding provided by, or obtained by, the Agency.

Students often contribute to research, policy analysis, program development and other written or creative work while on placement. Students are entitled to be listed as a co-author on such works, and may cite co-authored works achievements within their CV, and in the Mid or End Placement Report.

If there is a possibility that the placement may result in students having a more pressing claim to intellectual property to which the agency may also make a claim, the student should explicitly discuss their concerns with the agency and try to reach an agreement with their agency as to how the intellectual property rights will be dealt with. If necessary, they may wish to seek independent legal advice. Students should advise the Senior WIL Placement Officer (Social Work) as soon as possible if they think this may apply to them. In addition, both the student and the Liaison Tutor may be asked to sign a non-disclosure form or confidentiality agreement. Some agencies may also require students to complete agency specific documents upon commencement which include content relating to intellectual property and ownership of generated documents and resources.

### Use of mobile phones and social media whilst on placement

Students are advised not to use their mobile phones for personal reasons whilst accruing placement hours. If the student has a personal emergency which requires them to be in contact with significant others via their personal mobile phone, the process for this should be explicitly negotiated with their Field Educator. Under no circumstances is content regarding the Social Work Placement from a student's personal mobile phone (e.g. photos, text) to be uploaded to social media as this could potentially breach the confidentiality of the agency and the clients of the agency with which the student is placed. If a student is found to be breaching confidentiality by their actions, consideration will be given as to whether the student is permitted to continue in the Social Work Placement course. In addition, students are to follow the agency's policy on use of mobile phones in the workplace. For more information students should review the UNSW Student Code Policy found at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct> or the UNSW Student Social Media Guide found at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/social-media-guide>

## 5. Scholarships and awards

### Brenda Smith Scholarship (Level 3 Placement)

Brenda Smith was a teacher and researcher in the Social Work Practice strand of the BSW who died in 1989. During her decade of teaching - which she came to from social work practice in women's health – she inspired students through acceptance, encouragement and energy for action. She was an excellent teacher who was flexible enough to change the agenda if something wasn't working or if a particular area needed more attention. Brenda wrote: *The ideal of a 'well society' is one where men and women have equal access to the positive aspects of family, work and leisure. This can only become the case if patriarchal power to assume for women positions in society that they would not choose for themselves is exposed and challenged.*

Brenda left a legacy of thought, humanity, kindness, warmth and generosity for staff and students of the BSW.

The Brenda Smith Scholarship is available at <http://scholarships.online.unsw.edu.au> and is open during the Term before Level 3 Placement each year (i.e. Term 3 or the previous year). The selection criteria is:

- The applicant must be proposing to undertake the third year of the Bachelor of Social Work ((Honours)) degree or a Bachelor of Social Work ((Honours)) dual degree at UNSW;
- Each applicant will be assessed based on their Level 1 and Level 2 results and must have achieved a credit average or higher;
- To be eligible for the scholarship, a student must be suffering significant financial hardship that may hinder their successful completion of the program at UNSW;
- Applicants must provide a statement detailing their financial situation.

### The Sinja Kusljic Certificate of Merit in Field Education in Social Work (Level 3 Placement)

This certificate was established in 2010 following the death of Sinja Kusljic, who was a Level 3 social work student. Sinja died shortly after completing her Level 3 Placement. For those who taught her and for her student peers, the loss of Sinja was profound because of the personal characteristics that she displayed including her enthusiasm and dedication to her study and to her placement. They believed that Sinja would have made a significant contribution to social work in the broader community if she had gone on to practice.

Sinja's example was so inspiring that it was deemed appropriate to establish a lasting commemoration of her in the form of a Certificate of Merit. This is awarded on a yearly basis to a Level 3 Placement student who like Sinja, demonstrated the personal characteristics of professionalism, a passion for social work and social justice issues, determination, and strength.

### The Barry Bell Memorial Award for Excellence in Field Education Practice Learning (Level 4 Placement)

Barry Bell was a Liaison Tutor for the Placement Program in the Social Work Discipline who died in September 2013. In this role Barry worked with many students whilst they were on placement developing their professional identity and professional competence. Prior to this role Barry was a veteran social worker who had a long history working in corrective services, with Aboriginal communities, and with the GLBTI population. Throughout his professional career and even in his retirement, Barry continued to contribute towards social justice on all levels, embodying the dual identities of the personal member of humankind and the professional social worker.

At all times Barry was an example to UNSW Social Work students of professionalism, empathy, intuition and a deep regard for the marginalised populations. This Award recognises Level 4 students who demonstrate similar traits of professionalism and a regard for marginalised populations during their Level 4 Placement.

## 6. Occupational Health and Safety in the Social Work Placement

### Occupational Health and Safety

The university has a responsibility to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its students during their placement. Agencies offering placements are required to orientate students to Work Health and Safety Policies and Procedures currently in place in their agencies and to complete a Risk Assessment Sheet regarding their agency prior to the placement commencing. In the event of any incident or concern regarding student safety or well-being, students or field educators should contact the Work Integrated Learning Unit immediately. Information on relevant Work Health and Safety policies and expectations can be found at <http://safety.unsw.edu.au/>

#### Home Visitation upon placements

Students undertaking home visitation to clients as part of agency practice should only do so after the agency has completed a client risk assessment following established agency protocols and deemed by the agency to be no or low risk. In addition, any home visitation conducted must be completed with another staff member or student present. Students are not permitted to conduct home visits alone.

#### Transporting clients on placement

Students are not permitted to transport clients (including children) without an agency staff member present.

### Sexual Assault, Harassment & Misconduct

All students of UNSW have the right to feel safe and secure at all times and to be able to fully participate in all aspects of life on and off campus. We believe that unwanted sexual attention including harassment, stalking and assault can prevent a student from taking part in activities and involvement in the life of the University. We will support students who report sexual harassment or sexual assault. There are internal (i.e. within UNSW) and external options available. Information on options can be found at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/harassment>. Students can learn about the Respect. Now. Always campaign to prevent sexual assault and harassment at [www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au](http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au).

You can report incidents of sexual misconduct on the reporting portal at [www.student.unsw.edu.au/harassment](http://www.student.unsw.edu.au/harassment).

### Insurance coverage for students on placement

UNSW has a wide range of Insurance Policies to help protect the people and assets of UNSW.

The WIL Team can advise about the conditions of coverage, how to make a claim, as well as obtain confirmation of insurance coverage for placement students and WIL partner organisations. If a student sustains an injury on placement, they should contact the Senior WIL Placement Officer as soon as possible.

The UNSW Personal Accident Policy provides a range of benefits in the event of accidental death or accidental bodily injury whilst undertaking UNSW authorised activities. It does not cover claims arising from sickness, illness or disease. For more information about what is covered and how to make a claim please go to the UNSW webpage <https://www.fin.unsw.edu.au/services/insurance/personal-accident>

UNSW has protection for claims by third parties made against students on placement seeking compensation for negligence in the provision of professional services. For more information about what is covered and how to make a claim please go to the UNSW webpage <https://www.fin.unsw.edu.au/services/insurance/professional-indemnity>

A Letter of Indemnity is included in Placement Confirmation Pack sent to Field Educators prior to the commencement of each placement. If a placement commences early or extends beyond the scheduled completion date, the Work Integrated Learning Unit can update the insurance period to ensure appropriate student coverage for the entire placement.

Students undertaking rural, remote or international placements are expected to arrange travel insurance to safeguard them in emergencies, illness, loss or theft of property or misadventure. They are required to submit a copy of their insurance certificate to the Work Integrated Learning Unit prior to travel.

## **Transport and travel to placement**

Students are generally expected to travel to placement beyond their local radius which may be up to 1.5 hours from home in order to benefit from a range of experiences. The student's placement goals and learning needs will take priority over the distance of placement unless the Work Integrated Learning Unit is made aware of specific mitigating circumstances which are discussed and explored at the time of student interview. All efforts are made by the WIL team to accommodate mitigating circumstances taking into consideration the available offers.

The cost of travel to and from placement is to be met by students. Travel and sundry items of expenditure connected to the completion of placement tasks are expected to be borne by the agency. Students need to check prior to the commencement of placement whether the agency is willing to meet these costs.

# 7. The student experience in placement

## Student self-care issues

Overall, students find their social work placements to be rewarding and professionally satisfying. However, at times during placement, students sometimes find that issues arise for them either within the placement itself, for example, stress experienced because of the behaviour of agency staff and/or clients or outside the placement, for example, health, family or personal issues. These issues can affect not only a student's ability to perform during the placement but also a student's overall wellbeing. If a student becomes aware of a situation that is causing them stress, then they should initially seek support from their Field Educator. If they require more support, they should contact their Liaison Tutor. If the issues persist they should make a time to see the Senior WIL Placement Officer and/or the Course Convener.

## Problems or concerns that arise in placement

Any problems or concerns that arise in the placement are to be addressed as early as possible.

If a student has concerns about their experience or their ability to meet the expectations of the course, the process is as follows:

1. The student should initially seek support from their Field Educator.
2. If this is not possible or they require more support the student should contact their Liaison Tutor to discuss the matter. The Liaison tutor will provide support, mentoring, further resources, and guidance as appropriate. The student may be asked to provide written evidence of critical reflection to assist the Liaison Tutor to understand the situation more fully.
3. If the issues persist the student should make a time to see the Senior WIL Placement Officer and/or the Course Convener to discuss. The Senior WIL Placement Officer and/or the Course Convener will work in collaboration with the Supervisor and the Liaison Tutor to provide support, mentoring, further resources, guidance and/or referral to support services, and will establish processes to monitor and support the student.
4. If a student is considering withdrawal from the placement and/or the course, then they are required to notify the Senior WIL Placement Officer as soon as possible and discuss the reasons for their withdrawal. They must follow SOSS processes in relation to applying for a withdrawal, including processes for informing the placement agency. Students are to consider and discuss the implications of withdrawal from placement on the rest of their program with the WIL Unit, the School Office and/or the Nucleus.

If a supervisor has concerns about student performance, the process is as follows:

1. The issue is first raised with the student by the supervisor in a formal meeting. The Liaison Tutor should inform the Senior WIL Placement Officer about any concerns as early as possible.
2. The supervisor documents the meeting and ensures the Liaison Tutor is aware they have concerns. The Field Educator should complete the Placement Improvement Plan Template and provide the Liaison Tutor and Senior WIL Officer with a copy. The Senior WIL Officer will provide a copy of the Placement Improvement Plan to the Course Convenor. The improvement plan should be followed as per the process outlined in the template (Appendix A)

Concerns that are evident before the mid placement point are expected to be clearly documented in the Improvement Plan and the progress of the student also rated accordingly by the supervisor in the Mid Placement Report if the placement continues

3. If the concerns persist the Liaison Tutor will ask the Senior WIL Placement Officer to authorise a three-way review meeting between the supervisor, student and Liaison Tutor to follow on the with outcomes of the Improvement Plan. This should be **done within 2-3 weeks of the commencement of the plan**. The improvement plan is completed with one of three outcomes:
  - a) Improvements observed and placement on track for completion.
  - b) Additional improvements required for the remainder of the placement (should these not be met at any point, the placement may result in immediate cessation

c) Placement to be ceased.

i.) The Field Educator prepares a written report about the cessation for the Liaison Tutor who reports in writing back to the Senior WIL Placement Officer.

ii.) The Course Convenor requests documentation from the student, and receives the documentation prepared by the WIL Unit, Field Educator and Liaison Tutor. A meeting is convened with the Course Convenor and student to discuss the issues, and, if possible, at this point, determine the Placement Grade with respect to the AASW practice standards and UNSW assessment policy. The Course Convenor is responsible for determining the placement grade, taking into consideration all documentation, the student experience and staff feedback.

If a student wishes to appeal their Placement Grade, the process is as follows:

1. Following the determination of the placement grade, the student may contact the Course Convenor if they wish to appeal the grade. They will be required to outline their concerns to the Course Convenor in writing. The Course Convenor will review the student appeal and either upholds the original grade or make an alternate determination.
2. The student is entitled to contact the Program Convenor if they wish to make a further appeal. The Program Convenor will consider the appeal, consult with the Course Convenor and the WIL Unit and make a determination in the light of the evidence provided.
3. The student is entitled to contact the Deputy Head of School Learning and Teaching if they wish to make a further appeal. They should do so utilising the Request for a Review of Grade process as detailed in the Course Outline and UNSW Website. The Deputy Head of School Learning and Teaching will consider the appeal, consult with the Program Convenor and Course Convenor and make a determination in the light of the evidence provided.

## Other University assistance

Below are additional resources for students embarking on their placement experience:

- BSW (Hons) program information: [www.handbook.unsw.edu.au](http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au)
- Equity and student rights at university. Those students who have a disability that requires some adjustment to their learning environment are encouraged to engage with Equitable Learning Services (9385 4734). Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made. For more information go to the Equitable Learning Services page: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/els/services>
- Educational Support Advisors can assist students experiencing personal and health issues which are impacting their studies or attendance at UNSW. Contact 9385 4374 or go to the support page: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/educational-support-advice-personal-and-health-issues>
- The UNSW Counselling and Psychological Services Unit (9385 5418) provides a free and confidential counselling service. For more information go to the counselling page: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/counselling>
- The Learning Centre (9385 2060) provides individual and group tuition for essay writing, and exam anxiety and assistance with a range of other learning opportunities [www.lc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are encouraged to link up with Nura Gili which provides pathways to learning opportunities that embrace Indigenous knowledge, culture and histories. For more information contact Nura Gili on 9385 3805 and at <http://www.nuragili.unsw.edu.au>
- The UNSW Code of Conduct can be found at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct>



## Placement Improvement Plan

Social Work

The improvement plan is a tool to assist agencies and the university in circumstances where a student is not satisfying the learning requirements of placement or where the Field Educator (FE) has identified significant concerns regarding student practice.

The Template is completed by the Field Educator in consultation with the Liaison Tutor and Student. The completed template is shared by the Liaison Tutor via email with both the Senior WIL Officer and Course Convenor.

The plan is ideally initiated as early as possible in the placement and prior to the mid placement visit and mid placement report submission. The student must be given opportunity and a window of time to remediate such concerns in practice. A review date should be set for a period of 2-3 weeks with the student to implement improvements.

At the end of the review period the agency, student and university should be clear as to whether:

- 1) The student has made improvement and is on track to successfully complete the placement
- 2) The student requires additional modifications for the duration of the placement in order to successfully complete the placement OR
- 3) The student has inadequately demonstrated capacity for improvement and the placement is required to cease immediately. In this instance the student will be called to meet with the University Course Convenor (and Senior WIL Officer as required) to determine progression planning.



Date:

Student Name and email:

Agency Name:

Field Educator Name and email:

Summary of observed placement concerns:

---

---

---

---

Learning Components of Practice to be addressed (please circle those which apply):

Professionalism

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Values and Ethics

Knowledge for Practice

Applying Knowledge to Practice

Professional Development and Supervision

Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Practice

Information Recording and Sharing

Actions to be undertaken by student:

---

---

---

---

Actions to be undertaken by Field Educator:

---

---

---

---

Date for review of plan (to be undertaken two weeks from date of plan or 3 weeks if part time placement):

Review Feedback:

---

---

---

---

Outcome (Please Circle):

- 1) Improvements observed and placement on track for completion
- 2) Additional improvements required for the remainder of placement (should these not be met at any point, the placement may result in immediate cessation)
- 3) Placement to be ceased.

Name and Signature of Field Educator:

Name and Signature of Student:

Name and signature of Liaison Tutor:

Date:

Optional comments:

---

---

---

---