

WS Policy 5.4
Student Placement
Controlled Document

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the rationale for student placements at CatholicCare. Placements include work experience for secondary school and other short course students as well as professional experience for students undertaking vocational or tertiary studies in courses related to CatholicCare's services and programs.

2. Key Accountability

Managers

3. Application

This policy applies to all students undertaking placements at CatholicCare and the employees supervising and supporting those students.

4. Relevant Legislation

Nil

5. Accreditation Standards

Nil

6. Policy Statement

CatholicCare is committed to supporting the development of knowledgeable and skilled practitioners in the field of community welfare services.

CatholicCare believes that it has much to offer students by providing exposure to relevant learning experiences and to CatholicCare's ethical and socially responsible approach to delivering social welfare services. This is overseen by supervisors who are professional and experienced practitioners.

It is also recognised that the future viability and sustainability of the agency's services depends on its ability to identify, attract and nurture high quality staff. Student placements are one of a range of strategies used to achieve this outcome.

Student placements also assist CatholicCare to develop strong academic links with various educational institutions that may assist with research and development of agency programs.

Suitable students are offered an opportunity to practise their skills in a safe and supportive environment that satisfies the learning outcomes of their particular institutions, while teaching them to practise within CatholicCare's stated values of respect, integrity, compassion and equity.

Depending on the resources available at the time, placements will be considered in any of the programs managed by CatholicCare including Corporate Services.

7. Procedures

7.1 Relevant Courses of Study

7.1.1 Secondary School and Other Short Courses

Short term work experience placements may be available for secondary students or others undertaking short term courses. Due to the nature of CatholicCare's work these usually involve restricted observation and limited direct work. Students who are seeking experience in clerical and administrative work may be given a greater range of "hands on" tasks.

7.1.2 Post Secondary and Tertiary Courses

Placements may be appropriate for post secondary and tertiary students undertaking courses in human behaviour, community services, aged care, disability services, child care, youth work, administration, finance and commerce. Courses include, but are not restricted to:

- Bachelor/Master of Social Work (or relevant degrees recognised by the Australian Association of Social Workers)
- Bachelor/Master of Psychology (or relevant degrees leading to registration with the Psychology Board of Australia.
- Undergraduate or post-graduate counselling courses that lead to eligibility for Clinical Membership of the Counsellors' and Psychotherapists' Association of NSW (CAPA), and to eligibility for inclusion in the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) National Register.
- Bachelor of Arts with majors in social science subjects
- Bachelor/Master of Social Sciences/Human Services/Community Welfare especially related to Children's Services, Youth Work, Aged Care and Disability Services
- TAFE Certificate/Diploma in Community Services/Child Care/Youth Work/Aged Care/Disabilities/Pastoral Care
- Bachelor of Community Education
- Bachelor of Commerce
- TAFE Certificate/Diploma in Administration/Finance

7.2 Student Projects and Learning Opportunities

Placements are coordinated & overseen by Managers.

The tasks to be performed by students are determined by:

- the requirements of their academic institutions
- the learning outcomes dictated by their courses
- the operational needs of CatholicCare programs
- any contractual restrictions or conditions imposed on student placements by funding bodies

At all times students are placed in programs where they may operate safely and that have the capacity to satisfy the demands of their courses.

Depending on their courses of study the type of activities undertaken by students may include observation and/or participation in:

- casework – children, youth and adults
- counselling – individual, couple and family
- counselling in primary and/or secondary schools

- groupwork – therapeutic and educational with children, youth and adults
- community development, liaison and networking
- personal care, domestic assistance and social support – with elderly people and people with disabilities
- child care
- clerical and administrative tasks including report writing, case notes, minute taking
- human resource tasks
- financial activities

7.3 Application Process

7.3.1 Initial enquiries, from either individual students or educational institutions, are directed to the HR Officer who obtains basic details of the placement required and provides information about the application process. A copy of WS Policy 5.4 Student Placement (this policy) may be provided if appropriate.

After consulting with the relevant Manager(s) the HR Officer advises the student/ educational institution whether there is a placement with a suitable supervisor available. If so, students are required to complete WSFO 5.4.4 Application for Student Placement and address the criteria outlined below. Completed applications should be addressed to the Human Resources Officer who passes them to the relevant Manager.

7.3.2 Secondary & Other Short Course Students

Work experience for secondary and other short course students is generally arranged by teachers. The student completes Part A of the Application for Student Placement and submits it to the Human Resources Officer. This includes:

- the student's personal details
- the dates for which the placement is sought
- the number of hours involved
- the subjects being studied, and
- why the student is interested in a placement with CatholicCare.

Evidence that the student is covered by Personal Accident and Public Liability Insurance must also be submitted.

7.3.3 Post Secondary and Tertiary Students

In addition to Part A these students also complete Part B of the Application for Student Placement along with supporting documentation and lodge both with the Human Resources Officer. This includes:

- the student's personal details
- their educational qualifications and current course of study
- their academic transcripts
- a reference or referral from their educational institution that includes:
 - . the qualifications and experience required of the CatholicCare supervisor
 - . the reporting procedure
- the dates for which the placement is sought and the number of hours involved
- their areas of interest and, if known, the program in which they wish to be placed
- a statement of the reasons for requesting a placement with CatholicCare including what they will bring to the placement and what they hope to learn
- evidence that the student is covered by Personal Accident and Public Liability Insurance

7.4 Assessment of Applications

The Human Resources Officer acknowledges receipt of the application and advises the relevant Manager.

Consideration is given to the student's educational credentials (eg whether they have completed sufficient studies to warrant the placement being sought), the reasons the particular placement is requested and any particular benefits of the placement to CatholicCare. Students must provide a copy of the course objectives with their application.

The Manager confirms the proposed arrangements with the Executive Manager. Prior to a final decision, students are interviewed by the Manager and the HR Officer to explain the experience offered and assess their suitability. Staff members with particular qualifications may need to be involved e.g. if the placement is to also involve supervision related to registration with the Psychology Board of Australia.

Any costs associated with supervision for registration are borne by the student. However, where the student is eligible and capable of generating productive work, (eg. working therapeutically with clients) and internal supervision is available, that supervision may be offered free of charge in recompense for productive work.

The HR Officer arranges for relevant pre-placement screening to be carried out, prior to a final decision by the Manager.

7.5 Approval of Student Placements

The Manager approves the student's application for placement and the HR Officer advises both successful and unsuccessful applicants. The Manager signs an agreement with successful students.

7.6 Agreement

Appropriate documentation is often provided by the educational institution which the student attends. If not, a CatholicCare Agreement is used, setting out the student's details, the commencement and finishing dates, the program in which the student will work, where they will be located, to whom they will be responsible, key activities to be undertaken, supervision details and arrangements for reporting to the educational institution (WSFO 5.4.1 Student Placement Agreement).

The Agreement also includes an undertaking by the student to abide by CatholicCare's policies and procedures and its Code of Ethics and Conduct. The student is issued with an Induction Kit and is required to complete all relevant forms. Internal students (ie those who are already employed by CatholicCare in one program but are seeking a student placement in another) need only sign the Agreement.

Where possible the Agreement is also signed by a representative of the student's educational institution.

Managers retain a file containing copies of the student's application, transcripts, policy acknowledgement form, oath of confidentiality, criminal record and working with children checks and any other information relevant to the student's placement. Supervision notes are also kept on this file. For practical reasons, where appropriate, the student supervisor allocated to the student holds the file during placement.

7.7 Learning Contracts

Most post secondary and tertiary educational institutions also require a student learning contract. If not provided by the institution this document should include the learning goals and the method by which the goals will be achieved. The learning contract is reviewed at every supervision session and the student is required to demonstrate outcomes against each element of the contract.

7.8 Induction

The HR Officer introduces the student to CatholicCare using relevant sections of WS Policy 2.9 Employee Induction as a guide and noting completion on WSFO 2.9.2 Agency Induction Checklist - Student. Students are expected to attend a CatholicCare Orientation Day, if one occurs during their placement

The student supervisor inducts the student in relation to program specific matters, completing appropriate sections of WDFO 2.9.2 and any program documentation.

7.9 Professional Guidance

Each student is allocated to a suitable employee who provides professional guidance on an agreed, regular basis, under generally the same conditions as staff members (see WS Policy 4.1 Performance Planning and Review).

If CatholicCare is expected to provide clinical supervision for the student the allocated supervisor must be qualified to provide this as part of professional guidance rather than having a separate supervisor.

Under some agreements a student will receive clinical supervision from an external Field Educator contracted by the educational institution.

In all situations the CatholicCare Student Supervisor:

- provides day-to-day direction and support to the student about the activities in which they engage while on placement
- ensures students are provided with information about agency policies and procedures relevant to the student placement e.g. privacy and confidentiality
- liaises with relevant staff of the education institution, e.g. Field Educator/Field Education Manager/ Supervisor/ Liaison Visitor, as required and appropriate to determine how the day-to-day supervision and support can be provided to the student
- provides regular and specific feedback to the student and the representative of the educational institution about the student's performance on placement, including suggesting learning strategies and activities to assist learning.
- provides formal written feedback about student performance in accordance with the format and frequency agreed in the Student Agreement.

7.10 Finalisation of a Placement

Prior to the end of a placement the student and supervisor complete WSFO 5.4.3 Student Exit Checklist and CatholicCare resources are returned.

At the end of the placement the Student Supervisor encourages the student to participate in an exit interview with either the Supervisor or the HR Officer, using WSFO 5.4.1 Exit Interview – Student and WSFO 5.4.2 Exit Interview Guidelines - Student

If students are suitable and are interested in working with CatholicCare in the future the HR Officer adds their details to the Job Alert System (see WS Policy 2.3 Eligibility Lists & Job Alert System).

Any documentation relating to a student placement is held by the Supervisor for 6 months from the date the placement is finalised and then destroyed.

7.11 Early Termination of a Placement

While committed to making every effort to support a placement to its conclusion CatholicCare reserves the right to terminate a student placement at its discretion. Similarly it recognises the right of students to withdraw at their discretion.

Situations which may lead to termination of a placement include:

- professional misconduct
- non-compliance with CatholicCare’s contractual obligations, policies or the direction of a supervisor including breach of confidentiality or breach of professional boundaries
- sustained inability to demonstrate competency against learning outcomes
- unexplained absenteeism or non-participation in professional guidance
- behaviour that actually or potentially brings CatholicCare into disrepute

WS Policy 4.1 Performance Planning and Review provides guidelines for the management of these situations.

The Supervisor informs the student’s educational institution whenever there are concerns about the student’s performance or behaviour. However if there is a serious breach involved CatholicCare has the right to terminate the placement without consultation.

8. Attachments

Flowcharts

WSFL 5.4.1 - Student Placements – Application and Approval

Forms

WSFO 5.4.1 - Student Placement Agreement
WSFO 5.4.3 - Student Exit Checklist
WSFO 5.4.4 - Application for Student Placement
WSFO 5.4.5 - Exit Interview - Student
WSFO 5.4.6. - Exit Interview Guidelines - Student

9. Cross-reference to Other Policies

WS Policy 2.3 - Eligibility Lists and Job Alert System
WS Policy 2.5 - Employment Screening
WS Policy 4.1 - Performance Planning and Review

CatholicCare's Code of Ethics and Conduct

10. Version Control and Change History

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
1	Pre 2000	Director	New policy
2	16 Mar 2010	Director	Major review
3	02 Sep 2011	A/g Director	Addition of new forms
4	15 Jun 2012	Director	2 Year Review. Removal of twice yearly application procedure. Addition of application form
5	11 Mar 2014	Exec Mngr Qlty Sys (with authorisation of Director)	Change to 3 year review cycle. New logo
6	06 May 2015	Director	3 yr review. Clarification re payment of costs for registration as a psychologist. Amendment of procedures for finalising placements.
7	21 Jun 2018	Director	3 yr review. Clarification of the role of managers, HR Officer and student supervisors. Addition of new forms
8	01 Oct 2020	A/g Director	Amendment – up-date of reference to CatholicCare values