This is a short guide for placement providers on supervising a communication student on professional placement from the University of Newcastle.

Students will approach potential organisations to host a professional placement as part of their communication studies at the University of Newcastle. Each student will provide a letter of application and curriculum vitae to the host organisation. If the organisation agrees to host a professional placement, the student will ask the host organisation representative (i.e. the supervisor) to complete the online Placement Agreement Form.


Please read this form carefully, preferably with the student present. It requires the host organisation to commit to a placement of 80 hours. It may be completed in a single block (e.g. 10 days at eight hours a day), or a combination of block and intermittent times. The specific dates and times must be arranged and agreed in consultation with the supervisor before the placement begins. The host organisation will also be involved in the assessment of the professional placement.

After reading the guide, if you have any questions about a professional placement, please contact the Course Coordinator.

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SOME POINTS TO CONSIDER:

**Are you ready for a student placement?**

When your student starts a professional placement in your workplace help your student by articulating clearly what you expect. You should have some idea of what you want from the student based on the information provided on the online Placement Agreement Form. Go over it with the student. Students want to perform well in their placements and it helps if performance expectations are made clear.

**Is the student a good match with your organisation?**

Double-check that your student’s field of communication practice (e.g., journalism, media production, event management or public relations) matches with your organisation and you have opportunities for the student to experience that particular communication practice.

**Remember, the student will have the education but may not have had the opportunity to put what they’ve learnt into practice before.**

Supervisors should provide an orientation for the student. Welcome your student to the workplace both formally and informally (perhaps you could welcome your student at an informal morning tea or similar). Introduce the student to other members of your workplace team and let the student know that you and your organisation are happy that he or she is here. Emphasise that questions are OK.

**Assist the student to “fit in” and learn the basics of your organisation; how it functions and the nature of how the student will interact with colleagues.**

- Provide an overview of your organisation and/or department.
- Provide a clear direction on the number of hours to be worked (as per the Placement Agreement Form), appropriate attire, phone etiquette, work ethic, office decorum, resources, and other similar issues.
- Review the student’s responsibilities and discuss expectations of the placement—both student and organisation.
- Outline any organisational processes for obtaining approvals, expenses, and notifying absences.
- Provide the student with not just a supervisor but also a mentor if possible. A mentor can be a source of additional information about the organisation and an objective counsel on any potentially sensitive issue that may arise between supervisor and student.
Providers should provide practical experience.

The nature of the work placement should be the equivalent of an entry-level professional or more advanced work depending on the skills and experience of the student. Providers should minimise administrative and clerical duties. Duties such as photocopying and filing should be no greater than other colleagues. Students should not “shadow” or observe a mentor but be actively engaged and making contributions to the host provider.

Don't just assume your student will know how to do something in the way you want it done. Provide instruction as you set the task.

Expect the student to make mistakes, and help fix them. A mistake could be the result of inexperience or failing to think ahead or a difference of communication styles. The student will appreciate your assistance and the development of a working relationship.

Help the student to show you what he or she is good at.

Help the student to feel secure in your workplace and a part of your team, so the student can demonstrate his or her skills.

Does the student need a special clearance to work in your organisation?

Please help us to ensure any additional documentation particular to your organisation (e.g. a health check, Prohibited Employment Declaration, or a Criminal Record Check) is completed prior to the student commencing the placement.

How long is a placement?

80 hours. The placement may be organised generally in any way that is mutually acceptable to the placement provider and the student (e.g. it may be completed in a single block (e.g. 10 days at eight hours a day), or a combination of block and intermittent times. The specific dates and times must be arranged and agreed in consultation with the workplace supervisor before the placement begins. They may be re-negotiated by mutual agreement if necessary or desirable during the placement, as long as the total placement time is 80 hours.

Students will complete a report on their placement. The report will be in two parts:

1. A journal of their workplace experience.

2. An academic report analysing the modes of communication and discourses within the host organisation.

It will be helpful to the student if the placement is concluded with a formal final evaluation of some kind so the student and organisation may share results and provide feedback to each other on the experience.
We will contact you

The Course Coordinator will contact the host organisation, by email initially, to ask the placement supervisor a series of questions about the student’s attitude, compatibility with the professional work environment, and suitability for the profession. These questions are contained in the online Placement Supervisor Feedback Survey Form. Your response will be part of the student’s assessment.

What to do if you have a problem with the placement

If you have an issue with the student’s workplace performance, counsel the student as you would any other employee and contact the Course Coordinator immediately. Let us know so a small issue can be resolved quickly and easily early in the placement rather than at the end of a placement when it may be too late.

What happens if a student is injured while on a placement?

The University of Newcastle currently has in force a Personal Accident and Injury Insurance Policy (Appendix 1) for all enrolled students (undergraduate and postgraduate) on a 24 hour day basis 365 days a year. The policy provides cover whilst the student is engaged in course related activities and/or practical placement or community placement activities. It is an accident cover only and does not cover illness.

THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING OUR STUDENTS WITH AN IMPORTANT LEARNING EXPERIENCE.
Appendix 1 – Insurance Information. Liability and Personal Accident Insurance for Students on Placement and Confirmation of Insurance documents for:

- Business Travel and Personal Accident
- Professional Indemnity
- General and Products Liability
Confirmation of Insurance: Business Travel & Personal Accident

In our capacity as Insurance Broker to the Named Insured shown below, we confirm having arranged the following insurance, the details of which are correct as at the Issue Date:

Named Insured: The University of Newcastle

Insurer: Chubb Insurance Company of Australia

Policy Numbers:
- Corporate Travel – 93123224
- Group Personal Accident - 93123225

Insured Persons:

Category 1
Vice Chancellor of the Policyholder including their Accompanying Spouse / Partner and/or Dependent Child(ren).

Category 2
All Employees, Representatives and Members of the Council (excluding students) of the Policyholder including their Accompanying Spouse/Partner and/or Dependent Child(ren).

Category 3
All full-time, part-time students, post-graduate students, active life members, active associated members, appointed officials, voluntary workers, work experience personnel, and any other authorised persons of the Policyholder.

Category 4
All authorised visitors, scholarship holders, persons on research activities, persons receiving funding from authorised outside bodies and any other authorised persons associated with the scholastic activities of the Policyholder.

Scope of Cover:

Travel
Cover under the Policy applies whilst a Covered Person is on a Journey.

Personal Accident
Cover under the Policy applies to all those hazards to which a Covered Person is exposed whilst actually engaged in university related activities including but not limited to university sports, practical placement, community placement activities, work experience, exchange and voluntary work including necessary direct travel to and from such activities on behalf of the Policyholder. Provided always that the Policy shall only apply in respect of such activities officially organised by and under the control of the Policyholder.
Journey Definition: Journey shall mean any trip involving travel from the Covered Person's normal place of residence or business premises and shall start from the time of leaving home or normal place of business (whichever is left last) and continue until arrival back at home or normal place of business (whichever is reached first). Every day commuting shall not be regarded as a Journey. The maximum duration of any one trip shall be 365 days, although after 180 days only Medical and Additional Expenses coverage will apply.

Limit of Liability: $4,500,000 in the Aggregate

Expiry Date: 4.00pm, 1 November 2012

Signed for and on behalf of
Willis Australia Limited
Confirmation of Insurance: General and Products Liability Protection

In our capacity as Insurance Broker to the Named Insured shown below, we confirm having arranged the following insurance, the details of which are correct as at the Issue Date:

**Member:** The University of Newcastle

**Insurer:** Unimutual

**Policy Number:** NEW 11 GPL

**Covering:** The member has the right to claim protection for any amount that you are legally liable to pay as compensation for:

(a) personal injury or property damage which first occurs during the protection period and caused by an event in connection with your business;

(b) other injury caused by any injurious act, in connection with your business, first committed (or alleged to have been committed) during the protection period; or

(c) advertising injury caused by your advertisement, in connection with your business, first printed, stated, published, broadcast, exhibited, transmitted or displayed during the protection period.

**Geographical Limit:** Worldwide including limited cover for USA / Canada

**Limit of Protection:**
- $20,000,000 any one occurrence in respect of Public Liability
- $20,000,000 any one occurrence and in the aggregate in respect of Products Liability

**Expiry Date:** 24.00 Hours Eastern Standard Time, 31 October 2012

Signed for and on behalf of

Willis Australia Limited

Disclaimer:
This document has been prepared at the request of our client and does not represent an insurance policy, guarantee or warranty and cannot be relied upon as such. All coverage described is subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the insurance policy and is issued as a matter of record only. This document does not alter or extend the coverage provided or assume continuity beyond the Expiry Date. It does not confer any rights under the insurance policy to any party. Willis Australia Limited is under no obligation to inform any party if the insurance policy is cancelled, assigned or changed after the Issue Date.
Issue Date: 3\textsuperscript{rd} November 2011

To Whom It May Concern

Certificate of Placement – Professional Indemnity

In our capacity as Insurance Broker to the Named Insured shown below, we confirm having arranged the following insurance, the details of which are correct as at the Issue Date:

Named Insured: The University of Newcastle  
Newcastle Innovation (formally TUNRA)  
Gradschool.com Pty Ltd  
UoN Services Pty Ltd  
UoN Foundation Pty Ltd  
Hunter Uni Clinics Pty Ltd as Trustee for Cessnock Uni-Clinics Trust  
UoN Singapore Pte Ltd  
Newcastle University Sport (NUSport) Not for profit organisation limited by guarantee  
Central Coast Campus union Ltd trading as Campus Central.  
NUSA (Newcastle University Student Association)  
NUPSA (Newcastle University Postgraduate Student Association)  
Family Action Centre

Insurer(s): Vero Insurance Limited  
ABN: 48 005 297 807

Policy Number: LPP010737377

Limit of Indemnity: $20,000,000 Any One Claim / $40,000,000 in the Aggregate

Retroactive Date: Unlimited, excluding known claims and/or circumstances

Expiry Date: 4:00pm, 1\textsuperscript{st} November 2012
Issue Date: 3rd November 2011

To Whom It May Concern

Signed for and on behalf of
Willis Australia Limited

Disclaimer:
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