

## School of Education Professional Experience Policy

### Rationale

Professional Experience is considered both an integral and essential part of the Course of Study for all Education students. The University works in partnership with schools and early childhood centres and their staff to offer this practical experience, and the opportunity to observe professionals on the job. Being cognizant of the busy programs operating in schools and centres throughout the year, and their primary care and responsibility for their students, the University has set in the School Calendar the times Curtin Education students will undertake their professional experience, accommodating both the University timetable and the educational program in schools and centres.

### Principles

All students will be placed in a range of schools during their studies in Education exposing them to a range of cultures and religious beliefs. This might include schools from the State, Catholic and Independent sectors.

Late enrolment and mid-year intake students will be placed as early as practicable.

Bentley students will be encouraged to consider a rural block experience in their course, if this can be accommodated, especially as part of the third year of study.

The University will take into consideration student needs in terms of distance travelled to school placements.

Students will be expected to undertake their practicum in the weeks set aside for this in the Curtin University School of Education Calendar. This assists both the University and the schools/centres to manage the course content, supervision, costs and reporting, and creates a consistent time and space for Curtin students to be on professional experience. Other arrangements will only be considered in 'Exceptional Circumstances' (see below).

Where required, the University will communicate with the schools/centres and the students to maintain a record of correspondence and adjustments made.

### **NB: Placements will only be provided for those students who have**

**A) Completed and submitted to the School of Education ALL the appropriate documentation such as WWC clearance, and Department of Education Criminal History Record check. *(Student who have not submitted this documentation by the set date will need to withdraw from their unit. This may appear as a "fail" depending on the time of withdrawal), and***

**B) Met satisfactory performance in previous Professional Experience units and in their Units of study.**

### Exceptional Circumstances

***Serious illness of the student or an immediate family member qualifies for special consideration. Students communicate their need for special consideration to the Unit or Course Co-ordinators. Course Co-ordinators alert the Office of Professional Experience of any unusual circumstances to be accommodated.***

**NB Family weddings and holidays DO NOT QUALIFY as 'exceptional circumstances'.**

## **Procedure**

1. The Placement Officers from the Professional Experience Office, together with other relevant staff, will identify the schools/centres in which the Year groups will be placed.
2. Schools/centres will then be approached by the Placement Officer/s to confirm readiness to take Curtin students, seek a contact name or the name of the Professional Placement Coach / Coordinator, and advise the school/centre of the University's requirements.
3. Details of requirements and student names and areas of specialty, for example, Major teaching area, ECE or Primary Year group, shall then be emailed to the contact person in the school.
4. One to two weeks before students commence their practicum, the school, its PPC and/or Mentor Teacher should receive the Handbook and other relevant documentation.
5. Students will then be advised of their placements and their responsibilities in terms of the professional field experience placement. This will be undertaken both in writing and placed on Blackboard, and covered again at the Practicum Seminar to be held prior to commencement of the professional experience. Regional Students will be able to download recordings of the seminars (if recorded) or written information will be provided on Blackboard.
6. Where a student has experienced serious illness, the School of Education will conduct an interview with the student where a Doctor's Certificate should be supplied, to confirm that the student is sufficiently recovered to perform his/her duties in a school.
7. All documentation relating to point 6 or 'exceptional circumstance' shall be placed on the student's file for reference.
8. Whilst on Professional Experience, the Curtin student will be supervised by either a trained member of the school's/centre's teaching staff (the Professional Practice Coach) or a supervisor from the University.
9. A 'Not Competent' given by either a mentor teacher or a supervisor may result in the request for the Curtin student to undertake another professional experience to provide the opportunity to meet the required standards. The Course Co-ordinator will be consulted should this situation arise, and a Supplementary Assessment shall be submitted as the grade at Board of Examiners.
10. Students who withdraw from/or cancel their professional experience for whatever reason must notify their placement school and the Office of Professional Experience so that the University can officially notify the PPC/Mentor Teacher/s and school Principal/s. Withdrawing from a placement may result in a fail in that unit at the relevant Board of Examiners.
11. All members of staff in the School of Education are to be informed regularly of the dates, expectations and the process of professional experience, so as to share these with their classes and answer questions related to the dates and procedures of Professional Experience, through Blackboard, general Staff Meeting information or inclusion in Student group emails.

**Reviewed: February 2012**