

2022 Professional Experience Requirements (All Programs)

The following requirements guide and inform the Faculty of Education Professional Experience programs.

Enquiries or concerns should be directed to the Professional Experience Team via email (educationplacements@scu.edu.au).

1. GENERAL

- a. All Professional Experience placements (referred to as “placements”) will be negotiated with the site by the Professional Experience Team. Under no other circumstances are pre-service teachers to contact sites to negotiate their own placements as this is in opposition to the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and Southern Cross University guidelines.
- b. An exception to the above rule are Early Childhood workplace placements.
- c. Pre-services teachers are not permitted to be paid whilst undertaking a professional experience placement.
- d. Early Childhood pre-service teachers are not permitted to be counted in centre ratios whilst on placement.
- e. Childcare, work commitments and transportation are not considered grounds for placement adjustment and are therefore not acceptable reasons why pre-service teachers are unable to attend the site to which they have been allocated.
- f. While every effort is made to place pre-service teachers close to their residential address, at times the lack of available sites means travel of up to 90 minutes or 90 kilometres to and from a placement may be required.
- g. Pre-service teachers are not permitted to request specific site placements.
- h. Permission to undertake a placement will, at all times, be at the discretion of the Director Professional Experience or the Faculty of Education Dean.
- i. The professional experience calendar will be made available in October of the previous year.
- j. It is the pre-service teacher’s responsibility to become familiar with the professional experience calendar for the year in which they will be undertaking their placement. Please note that pre-service teachers must be available for all placement days in the scheduled format for the professional experience unit in which they are enrolled. **Placement dates are not negotiable.**
- k. Placements in school settings must be completed in a full-time block format (5 days a week) to meet accreditation requirements.
- l. Placements in early childhood settings are permitted by ACECQA to be undertaken in a part-time capacity, with a minimum of three days a week, with the same three days each week. International students however, must complete their placements in a full-time block (5 days a week) due to visa conditions.
- m. Pre-service teachers must be familiar with, and adhere to, site policies and procedures during their placement.
- n. It is the pre-service teacher’s responsibility to check the Professional Experience Student Centre Blackboard Site and Sonia Online on a regular basis for updated information regarding placement and associated professional experience information.

- o. Pre-service Teachers will be notified if and when they must upload their professional experience report on completion of their placement. It is the students responsibility to keep copies of all professional experience reports.
- p. The Professional Experience Team will place a finalised copy of pre-service teacher reports onto Sonia. Pre-service teachers will then be able to download copies directly from Sonia Online.
- q. Once a professional experience report has been finalised by the Unit Assessor it is the pre-service teacher's responsibility to keep the original in a safe place.
- r. Pre-service teachers should wear on placement suitable SCU identification. It is also appropriate for pre-service teachers to wear a name badge provided to them by the placement site.
- s. It is the Pre-service teacher's responsibility to ensure they have a broad brimmed hat for outdoor activities at their site.
- t. Non mandatory SCU Faculty of Education polo shirts and hats for placements are available through the School Locker Website.
- u. It is recommended that Pre-service Teachers NOT enrol in any other units in the same Term as their professional experience unit, unless there is a professional experience co-requisite unit or a student's personal course progression requires this.
- v. Pre-service teachers must only enrol in one professional experience unit per Term. Pre-service teachers should seek advice from Client Services in regards to their study plan, as they will only be permitted to undertake one placement per Term.
- w. Pre-service teachers who vary their study plan, take leave or undertake an overseas exchange that impacts on a placement, need to be aware that this may impact on their course completion date.
- x. Pre-service teachers must be willing to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements (if required) and cover all associated costs of their placement.
- y. It is the pre-service teacher's responsibility to contact their designated University Adviser if they are experiencing difficulties or have issues when undertaking their placement.

2. IN-ZONE PLACEMENTS (local to campus)

- a. The in-zone geographical area for placements is from Macksville in the South to Upper Coomera (South East Queensland) in the North. This may however vary, according to the availability of University Advisers.
- b. Pre-service teachers will normally undertake each placement in a different site unless there is a special program or requirement.
- c. It is imperative that pre-service teachers contact their designated site prior to commencing their placement. Pre-service teachers are required to contact their designated site as soon as instructed by the Professional Experience Team. Failure to do so may result in the placement being withdrawn.

3. OUT-OF-ZONE PLACEMENTS (at a distance from campus)

- a. Pre-service teachers requesting to undertake an interstate placement must take responsibility to be informed of site/state requirements and ensure that they are eligible to undertake a placement in regard to that state's policies and procedures.
- b. Pre-service teachers undertaking their placement interstate must provide the Professional Experience Team with relevant Working with Children Clearance documentation for the State or Territory in which they are undertaking their placement.
- d. It is imperative that pre-service teachers contact their designated site prior to commencing their placement. Pre-service teachers are required to contact their designated site as soon as instructed by the Professional Experience Team. Failure to do so may result in the placement being withdrawn.

4. OVERSEAS/INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENT

- a. If pre-service teachers are considering an international placement they must first contact the Professional Experience Team via educationplacements@scu.edu.au, to check eligibility.

5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- a. Placements must not be undertaken in a site where a pre-service teacher has a conflict of interest - that is, where a conflict potentially exists for a pre-service teacher as a result of one or more of the following:
 - i. which is their place of employment
 - ii. where they have close relatives attending, employed or working at the site (eg partner, parent, sibling, child)
 - iii. where they are a member, or have a close relative, on the site's board.
- b. Pre-service teachers must declare to the Professional Experience Team any sites where they have a Conflict of Interest. Conflicts of interest are declared on the Placement Form required for each placement.
- c. Pre-service teacher conflicts of interest are recorded in Sonia.
- d. Pre-service teachers must immediately disclose to the Professional Experience Team if they have been placed in a site where they have a conflict of interest. Failure to do so may result in a deferred placement.
- e. The Director Professional Experience, in consultation with the Professional Experience Team, reserves the right to withdraw a placement should a pre-service teacher fail to disclose a conflict of interest

6. STRICT ENROLMENT CUT-OFF DATES FOR PEX UNITS

- a. Students enrolling in a PEx unit must comply with strict enrolment dates to be eligible for a placement in that Term. Late enrolments are not eligible to undertake the placement as scheduled.

7. TIMING OF PLACEMENTS

- a. Placements in school settings must be undertaken in a full-time block format (5 days a week) to meet NESA accreditation requirements.
- b. Placements in early childhood settings are permitted by ACECQA to be undertaken on a part-time basis (minimum 3 days per week, same days each week). This excludes International students due to visa conditions.
- c. International students must undertake their placement in a full-time block format (5 days a week) due to visa conditions.
- d. Placements must be undertaken during a scheduled placement period and in the approved/scheduled format indicated on the current Professional Experience Calendar.
Professional experience placement days are not negotiable.
- e. The University cannot consider requests from pre-service teachers or sites to "fast track" a pre-service teacher's placement to be eligible for employment opportunities.
- f. If a pre-service teacher is unable to undertake a placement in the approved scheduled time for that unit, he/she must apply, via a Placement Adjustment Application, for approval to complete the placement during the next scheduled placement period. Placement Adjustment Applications will be considered by the Professional Experience Committee. Grounds for placement adjustment are:
 - i. health (including impacts of religious fasting)
 - ii. compassionate circumstances
 - iii. religious observances or celebrations
 - iv. serious unforeseen personal events
 - v. selection in State, National or International sporting or cultural events

- vi. rendering genuine and unforeseen emergency service in a professional or voluntary capacity
- vii. rendering any service (including undertaking training) in the Defence Reserves.
- viii. Termination of Placement
- g. Failure to undertake a deferred placement during the next scheduled placement period will normally result in a fail grade for the placement and hence the professional experience unit.

8. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

- a. Students who are registered with Student Equity and Inclusion who have any concerns about their placement must contact the Professional Experience Team.
- b. Students who are pregnant should contact the Professional Experience Team and Director Professional Experience to ensure their safety and well-being during their professional experience.
- c. As part of site health and safety, pre-service teachers who are engaged in professional experience placement:
 - i. Who are pregnant are required to provide a medical certificate to validate their fitness to proceed to their placement. The University and the site has the right to request additional medical certificates
 - ii. having a pre-existing medical condition that could impact on them during a placement, may be required to provide a medical certificate to validate their ability to undertake the placement.
- d. If pre-service teachers have any concerns about their ability to undertake their placement and fulfil their full range of duties, they should obtain medical advice and notify the Professional Experience Team.
- e. Students must notify the Professional Experience Team if they are aware that their work performance or conduct in placement sites could be adversely affected as a result of taking a prescribed drug. Their designated placement site may also have to be informed if the prescribed medication may impact on a pre-service teacher's placement.
- f. Support is also offered through SCU's Student Equity and Inclusion <https://www.scu.edu.au/engage/student-equity-and-inclusion/>

9. DEFERMENT OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS

- a. Request to defer placements must be submitted through a Placement Adjustment Application. Placement Adjustment Applications are available for students to download through the 'Forms' Tab of SONIA Online.
- b. Placement Adjustment Applications are reviewed by the Professional Experience Committee who meet on a weekly basis.
- c. Placement Adjustment Applications requesting to defer placements must meet the grounds for placement adjustment in order to be considered for approval:
 - i. health (including impacts of religious fasting)
 - ii. compassionate circumstances
 - iii. religious observances or celebrations
 - iv. serious unforeseen personal events
 - v. selection in State, National or International sporting or cultural events
 - vi. rendering genuine and unforeseen emergency service in a professional or voluntary capacity
 - vii. rendering any service (including undertaking training) in the Defence Reserves.
 - viii. Termination of placement
- d. Requests to defer placements are approved on the provision that the deferred placement is undertaken during the next scheduled placement period unless special circumstances require an extension which must be requested through the Placement Adjustment Application process.

- e. Deferred placements not completed in the approved timeframe will receive a fail grade for the professional experience unit.

10. ATTENDANCE

- a. Pre-service teachers must attend all placement days and be present for the whole school / centre day.
- b. If an absence occurs due to illness or misadventure, the pre-service teacher must inform the site of their absence as early as possible and make up the days missed.
- c. Arrival and departure times specified by the site must be adhered to by all pre-service teachers. Normally, pre-service teachers would be present at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the site day and be available for various commitments for at least 30 minutes at the end of the day.
- d. Students are required to make themselves available for after hours staff meetings and any after hours duties.
- e. If a pre-service teacher is absent during their placement for **two or less** consecutive days, they will be required to complete a "Make-up Day" form available in the Forms Tab of SONIA Online. Pre-service teachers are also required to inform their University Advisers of make-up days.
- f. A Placement Adjustment Application along with supporting documentation/medical certificate, is required for absences of **three or more** consecutive days. Medical certificates should be attached to the pre-service teacher Attendance Record and returned on completion of the placement.
- g. If a pre-service teacher is absent from their placement for **5 consecutive** teaching days, the continuance of the placement will be renegotiated by the University Adviser in consultation with the site and student
- h. **Pre-service teachers are not permitted to negotiate placements days with their Mentor Teachers, nor to absent themselves from their placements for matters such as holidays, weddings, childcare or work.** Any special requests must be submitted via Placement Adjustment Application for review by the Professional Experience Committee.
- i. Pre-service teachers who have unexplained absences from their site and have not had an approved Placement Adjustment Application will be deemed to have abandoned the placement. This will result in a fail grade for the placement and hence the professional experience unit.
- j. If the Director Professional Experience or Faculty of Education Dean, deems a pre-service teacher to be unfit for placement, a recommendation will be made and the pre-service teacher will be advised to withdraw from the placement. The pre-service teacher will be required to submit a Placement Adjustment Application with appropriate supporting documentation to prove they are fit for placement before they will be considered to undertake another placement.

11. MANDATORY PLACEMENT CHECKS AND THE TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

- a. For pre-service teachers to be eligible to undertake a placement, they must be deemed compliant with their mandatory placement checks, ensuring they have submitted all mandatory placement check documents to Sonia Online by the due date, as instructed by the Professional Experience Team.
- b. Mandatory Placement Checks are listed for pre-service teachers in the 'Checks' Tab of SONIA Online as well as the Professional Experience Student Centre.
- c. It is the student's responsibility to be informed of the due dates for Mandatory Placement Checks. Due Dates are available on the Professional Experience Student Centre.
- d. It is the pre-service teacher's responsibility to ensure they have submitted all of the mandatory placement check documents by the specified due date.
- e. Failure to do so means the Traffic Light System will come into play and pre-service teachers

- will normally not be able to undertake the placement in the Term enrolled.
- f. The Traffic Light System indicates a pre-service teacher's level of compliance and is determined by the the date mandatory placement checks are submitted to SONIA Online.
 - g. Pre-service teachers with a Check Status of 'Not Complete' by the specified due date will be deemed as NOT compliant and will not be permitted to undertake placement in the enrolled Term.
 - h. Pre-service teachers who are not compliant with their mandatory placement checks by the specified due dates will be notified of the procedure following.

12. CHILD PROTECTION / WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

- a. To be eligible for placement, pre-service teachers must complete the relevant child protection training for the state in which they are undertaking placement. (refer to the Professional Experience Student Centre).
- b. All pre-service teachers **must** also ensure they comply with the working with children legislation requirements of the State/Country where their placement is occurring.
- c. Pre-service teachers **must** provide evidence to the Professional Experience Team via SONIA Online, that they have applied/met the legislation requirements of the relevant State/Country, in order to be eligible to undertake a placement. Please note that obtaining a Working with Children Check can take an extended period of time, so you should commence the process early to prevent it from impacting on your placement.
- d. It is recommended that pre-service teachers residing in the Tweed and Gold Coast areas have both a valid Qld Blue Card and NSW Working with Children Check.
- e. Pre-service teachers who do not have a the correct WWCC will not be able to proceed to their placement.
- f. Pre-service teachers undertaking a placement in other states or overseas must comply with requirements in these jurisdictions. Copies of child protection documentation for placements in other jurisdictions must be uploaded to SONIA Online.
- g. A pre-service teacher will not undertake a placement if he/she has not submitted the appropriate child protection forms to Sonia Online.
- h. When a pre-service teacher is accused of a legal matter pertaining to child protection, the pre-service teacher will be withdrawn from the placement immediately until the matter is investigated. When a pre-service teacher is deemed guilty of the offence, the pre-service teacher will receive a fail grade for the placement and hence the professional experience unit. This matter will then be dealt with by the authorities.

13. CODE OF CONDUCT

- a. Pre-service teachers are required to comply with the standards and expectations as detailed in the Southern Cross University, Faculty of Education Code of Conduct whilst on placement, regardless of the jurisdiction, or type of site in which they are placed.
- b. A breach of the Code of Conduct whilst on placement may lead to a termination of the pre-service teacher's placement, by either the school or the University, resulting in a fail grade for the Professional Experience unit that they are studying and potentially exclusion from the Course and the University.
- c. Pre-service teachers must submit a Code of Conduct Declaration as part of their Pre-service Teacher Placement Agreement (a mandatory placement check). Failure to do so will prevent the pre-service teacher from participating in any site placements.
- d. Pre-service teachers should become familiar with the Non-academic Capabilities prior to undertaking their placement. The non-academic capabilities can be found in the Professional Experience Handbook and on the professional experience report.
- e. As part of the professional requirements of this course pre-service teachers are required to address the Professional Experience Staff, including the Director Professional Experience, in a professional manner at all times.

- f. An inability to behave in a professional manner would need to be justified as to why a pre-service teacher should proceed or continue to their placement.
- g. **Pre-service teachers are advised to avoid sharing information about students or sites on all social media platforms. Placing such information on social media may result in termination of candidature and/or placement.**
- h. **All pre-service teachers must have their social media accounts set to private.**
- i. Pre-service teachers must maintain confidentiality and high standards of professionalism in relation to their placement (for example, dress, punctuality and use of mobile phones).

14. ANAPHYLAXIS TRAINING

- a. It is a requirement that all pre-service teachers are trained in anaphylaxis management before they undertake any placements. Please refer to the Professional Experience Student Centre for further information and weblink to the accepted training module for pre-service teachers.

15. PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENT

- a. As a condition of any type of professional experience - including placement, volunteering, laboratory work, research, or community-engaged learning – pre-service teachers are required to provide evidence of compliance and health protection before participating in any of these activities. Note:
 - Student compliance is a mandatory, legislative and regulatory requirement;
 - To be able to attend placement, students must be compliant; and
 - Students must meet the requirements of both Southern Cross University and the external organisation. This will ensure the safety of students and others

16. NESA CONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION PLACEMENT (NSW)

- a. Pre-service teachers in their final year of studies that have conditional accreditation and are employed in a school, may be approved to undertake their final placement in their place of employment.
- b. Conditional Accreditation Placements are granted with strict parameters and therefore must be approved by SCU, the site and NESA.
- c. For information regarding eligibility and process, please refer to the Professional Experience Student Centre.

17. QCT PERMISSION TO TEACH PLACEMENT (QLD)

- a. Pre-service teachers in their final year of studies that have Permission to Teach approval and are employed in a school, may be approved to undertake their final placement in their place of employment.
- b. Permission to Teach approval is granted within strict parameters and therefore must be approved by SCU, the site and QCT.
- c. For further information regarding eligibility and process, please refer to the Professional Experience Student Centre.

18. LITERACY AND NUMERACY TEST FOR INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION (LANTITE)

- a. All initial teacher education students enrolled in the Faculty of Education at Southern Cross University must complete the LANTITE. Excluding students enrolled in the Graduate Diploma of Education (Early Childhood) and Master of Teaching (Early Childhood).
- b. Pre-service teachers are required to complete and pass the LANTITE prior to enrolling in their second professional experience unit.
- c. For further information on the LANTITE please refer to the Faculty of Education Website.

19. PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS WHO SELF-WITHDRAW FROM PLACEMENT

- a. If a pre-service teacher has commenced a placement and self-withdraws from the placement, a fail grade will be recorded for the professional experience and hence the unit.
- b. If a pre-service teacher self-withdraws from a placement and believes there were special circumstances, they should submit a Placement Adjustment Application within 10 working days of withdrawing themselves from the placement. The University's Rule 3.4 Grounds for Special Consideration are:
 - i. health (including impacts of religious fasting)
 - ii. compassionate circumstances
 - iii. religious observances or celebrations
 - iv. serious unforeseen personal events
 - v. selection in State, National or International sporting or cultural events
 - vi. rendering genuine and unforeseen emergency service in a professional or volunteer capacity
 - vii. rendering any service (including undertaking training) in the Defence Reserves.
- c. Pre-service teachers who do not submit a Placement Adjustment Application (along with appropriate supporting documentation) within 10 working days will receive a fail grade for the placement and hence the professional experience unit.

20. INCIDENT AND HAZARD REPORTING

- a. Incidents and Hazards can be reported two different ways:
 - i. Through 'RiskWare' online management system. Link provided: <https://www.scu.edu.au/staff/hr-services/workplace-health-and-safety/reporting-an-incident-or-hazard/> or
 - ii. RiskWare pocketSafety mobile application. Simply download the pocketSafety app onto your mobile device.
- b. If a pre-service teacher is injured whilst undertaking their placement, an Incident/Hazard Report must be submitted online within 24 hours of the incident.
- c. The Incident Accident and Hazard Online Report weblink can be found on the Professional Experience Student Centre in the 'Forms' section and on the [Faculty of Education Professional Experience Website](#)
- d. In addition, pre-service teachers must complete the incident report normally used by the site in which they are placed.

21. EXCURSIONS/SCHOOL CAMPS

- a. Pre-service teachers undertaking placements are covered by the University's travel, personal accident, public liability and professional indemnity insurance provided that the placement is undertaken as part of an approved course or unit.
- b. Excursions undertaken outside of a placement are not covered by SCU Policy.
- c. Pre-service teachers who are requested to attend an excursion that is more than one day in length whilst undertaking their placement, are required to:
 - a. complete the "Notification of School Camp/Excursion during Professional Experience Placement" form available in the Forms section of SONIA Online.
 - b. Inform their University Adviser of the excursion/school camp details.

22. PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS AT RISK POLICY

- a. When a pre-service teacher is deemed to not be meeting the requirements of a placement, the pre-service teacher may be provided with a Developmental Support Plan (DSP). The DSP can be given to the pre-service teacher at any time during the placement. If the pre-service teacher fails to meet the requirements of the DSP they will receive a fail for the placement

and hence the unit. For further information please refer to the Professional Experience Handbook "At Risk Policy" section.

23. EXCLUSION

- a. Under the University's Exclusion Rule 2.10 (116) (a) The Chair of the Faculty Board may exclude a student for a maximum of one (1) study period where a student has failed compulsory professional experience or fieldwork requirements of the course.
- b. Under the University's Exclusion Rule 2.10 (117) (a) The Chair of the Faculty Board may exclude a student permanently from a course where a student has failed compulsory professional experience or fieldwork requirements for the second time.

24. SUPPORT OF YOUR PLACEMENT

- a. The University engages staff to support students prior to, during and after your placement. Sometimes a placement can raise levels of anxiety or stress so it is important that students are aware of services that can support them e.g. The Director Professional Experience, University Adviser, SULO and the Professional Experience Team.
- b. SCU also provides Counselling and Equity and Inclusion Services.
 - i. [Counselling Services](#) (Email counselling@scu.edu.au, Lismore and Gold Coast phone: 02 6626 9300 and Coffs Harbour phone: 02 6659 3263.
 - ii. [Student Equity and Inclusion](#) (Email: inclusion@scu.edu.au, Phone 02 6626 9514.
- c. The [SCU Out-of-Hours Crisis Support Line](#) is also available after hours. Phone: 1300 782 676 or text 0488 884 143.
- d. At times, your family, partner or friends may be able to offer personal support to you during the placement but specific information related to your course, placement processes or assessment should be referred to relevant staff in the Faculty of Education. Please note: The Faculty of Education cannot disclose any specific details related to the placement and parents/carers are not to contact the school or early childhood setting on behalf of the student. Concerns should be referred to the Faculty of Education which will then contact the relevant school/early childhood setting.