This Manual has been designed for students and agency based Field Educators (supervisors) of the Bachelor of Social Work and Bachelor of Social Work Honours Programs, School of Social Sciences, UNSW Australia. It contains information about Social Work Practice – Level 3 Placement (SOCW3011) and Social Work Practice – Level 4 Placement (SOCW4010), 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 Content

1. Overview of Field Education in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)/ Bachelor of Social Work Honours (BSW Hons.) Program ................................................................. 5
   Objectives of Field Education ........................................................................................................................ 5
   Field Education policy .......................................................................................................................................... 5
   The Field Education placement ......................................................................................................................... 6
     Practice methods in placement ....................................................................................................................... 6
   The Field Education team .................................................................................................................................. 6
   Roles and responsibilities in Field Education .................................................................................................... 7
     The University .................................................................................................................................................. 7
     Students ............................................................................................................................................................ 7
     Field Educators and agencies .......................................................................................................................... 8

2. Prior to placement starting ................................................................................................................................. 10
   Internal student checks ..................................................................................................................................... 10
     Progression rules .............................................................................................................................................. 10
     Credit for welfare degree placement ........................................................................................................... 10
   External student checks .................................................................................................................................... 10
     National Criminal Record Check requirements and Working with Children’s Check .................................... 10
     Vaccination and infection control ................................................................................................................ 10
     Negotiation and allocation of placement ...................................................................................................... 10
     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 field education placements ......................................................................................................... 12
   Timing of field placements ............................................................................................................................... 12
     Social Work Practice Level 3 Placement (SOCW3011) - Year 3, Semester 1 ............................................. 12
     Social Work Practice Level 4 Placement (SOCW4010) - Year 4, Semester 2 ............................................. 12
     Placements outside Sydney ............................................................................................................................. 12
     Rural, remote and interstate ............................................................................................................................. 12
     International placements ................................................................................................................................. 13
   Placement in places of employment .................................................................................................................. 13
   Agencies with internal application procedures ............................................................................................ 14
   Variation of placement arrangements ............................................................................................................. 14
   Variation of placement dates .......................................................................................................................... 14
4. Assessment in Field Education .............................................................................................................. 15
   The Mid Placement Liaison Visit ............................................................................................................. 15
   Mid and End Placement Reports ........................................................................................................... 15
   Student attendance requirements at placement ...................................................................................... 16
   Accrual of ‘overtime’ ............................................................................................................................... 16
   Intellectual property and confidentiality ................................................................................................. 16
   Use of mobile phones and social media whilst on placement ................................................................. 16

5. Scholarships and awards ......................................................................................................................... 18
   Brenda Smith Scholarship (Level 3 Placement) .................................................................................... 18
   The Sinja Kusljic Certificate of Merit in Field Education in Social Work (Level 3 Placement) ............. 18
   The Barry Bell Memorial Award for Excellence in Field Education Practice Learning (Level 4 Placement) ......................................................................................................................... 18

6. Occupational Health and Safety on field placement .............................................................................. 19
   Occupational Health and Safety ............................................................................................................. 19
   Insurance coverage for students on placement ..................................................................................... 19
   Transport and travel to placement ......................................................................................................... 19

7. The student experience on field placement .......................................................................................... 20
   Student self-care issues ........................................................................................................................... 20
   Withdrawal from field education courses ............................................................................................ 20
   Field Education appeals and grievance structure ............................................................................... 20
   Other University assistance .................................................................................................................. 20

8. UNSW Graduate Certificate of Supervision in field education in Social Work ..................................... 21
   Graduate list 1997-2014 ......................................................................................................................... 21
   2014 ...................................................................................................................................................... 21
   2011 ...................................................................................................................................................... 21
   2009 ...................................................................................................................................................... 21
   2007 ...................................................................................................................................................... 22
   2005 ...................................................................................................................................................... 22
   2003 ...................................................................................................................................................... 22
   2001 ...................................................................................................................................................... 23
   1999 ...................................................................................................................................................... 23
   1998 ...................................................................................................................................................... 23
1. Overview of Field Education in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)/ Bachelor of Social Work Honours (BSW Hons.) Program

Objectives of Field Education

Field education is an integral component of the Bachelor of Social Work and Bachelor of Social Work Honours Degrees. The field education strand is implemented as a joint endeavour of the Social Work Program and the field agencies that offer students the opportunity to develop practice competence under qualified supervision in approved human service organisations. The two field education courses are Social Work Practice Level 3 Placement (SOCW3011) 18 units of credit and Social Work Practice Level 4 Placement (SOCW4010) 24 units of credit.

These two compulsory courses in the field education 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 field education 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.

Field Education policy

It is the policy of the field education courses:
1. To uphold the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) Practice Standards (2013) and the minimum educational requirements for field placements. These include:
   a) A minimum of 140 x 7 “working hour” days of supervised instruction (980 hours total).
   b) Supervision by a Field Educator qualified for membership of the AASW, and with 2 years practice experience.
   c) Placements which cover both direct (i.e. casework, counselling, group work) and indirect practice methods of social work intervention (i.e. community work, research, policy).
   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 field education.

5. Students, field educators and their agencies are supported by the field education staff through Seminars, Mid Placement Liaison Visits, workshops and additional consultation when necessary.

6. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the field education Office of any personal history or current issues (e.g. physical, psychological or behavioural) that may hinder them from participating fully in a field placement. Where possible, the 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 Field Education placement

A field placement involves a student being assigned to a Field Educator in a social welfare, health or community service agency for a particular 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 both 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 both Level 3 and Level 4 placements, each student should have experience in mezzo or macro work i.e. project work, community development, organisational development, research or policy.

- Over the course of both 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 Field Education team

Prior to each placement, students will communicate with relevant university field education staff to plan and prepare for the placement. These university staff are:

- **Manager Field Education**
  Maintains the overall integrity of the field education strand of the Bachelor of Social Work program. They also liaise with other universities as well as health and welfare organisations. The Manager Field Education makes all academic decisions in relation to the overall development and co-ordination of the particular placement course, including the corresponding integration seminars. This includes involvement in negotiating placement difficulties and the awarding of the final grades for each student.

- **Field Education Officer**
  Coordinates the preparation of the placement including: liaising with both field educators and students in the negotiation of placements; assessing individual students learning needs prior to placement; allocating students and Liaison Tutors to agencies for placement. Contribute to the learning and teaching that corresponds with a placement, including the Integration Seminars.
• **Academic Field Education Consultant**  
  Consults to the Manager Field Education in matters of students’ progression, teaching and learning in field education.

• **Liaison Tutor**  
  Provides support and consultation to both student and field educator during the placement, reporting to the Manager Field Education. They make contact with both parties early in the placement; conduct the formal Mid Placement Liaison Visit to check on student progress; works with both parties in consultation with the Manager Field Education to resolve any difficulties that may arise.

• **Field Education Administrative Assistant**  
  Provides administrative assistance in the systems and processes of all field education placements, including administrative support to the field education staff, Field Educators, students and Liaison Tutors.

### Roles and responsibilities in Field Education

A good field placement rests on effective collaboration between students, Field Educators and the university. The responsibilities of each party are as follows:

**The University**

1. Arranges student 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 field 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 National Police Clearance 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 special requirements 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 Manager Field Education.
2. Ensure that course pre-requisites are completed.
3. Complete all required documentation as specified by the field education staff.
4. Formally disclose any personal history or current issues (e.g. physical, psychological or behavioural) that may hinder them from participating fully 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 university’s code of conduct.
2. Advise the Field Educator and Manager Field Education 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 and university 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 field education 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 Manager Field Education 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 field education staff of any difficulties that may arise in the placement.
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 Field education 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 Occupational Health and Safety Policies and Procedures currently in place in their agencies.

19. Inform the university of any specific policies in their agency relevant to student placement.

20. Recommend a final grade to the Manager Field Education.
2. Prior to placement starting

Internal student checks

Progression rules

Students enrolling in each of the field education placements are required to meet the pre-requisites and co-requisites of these courses. The progression rules outlining the relationship of field education courses and other Social Work Program courses are available in the Social Work Undergraduate Handbook [http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au](http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au). Queries on this matter are to be addressed to the Social Work Student Advisor and the Manager Field Education.

Credit for welfare degree placement

Students who have completed a three year social welfare degree program may apply for credit for 25% of the Level 3 Placement, or 17 days credit. If granted, the total days for Level 3 Placement would be 53 days.

External student checks

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

Students are required to have in their possession a National Police Certificate (Criminal Record Check) prior to starting placement and, as a condition of university insurance coverage, this must be sighted by the field education office before the student can begin. The student must apply for a National Police Certificate at their local police station to initiate this process. If there are any concerns regarding the outcome of this check it is the student’s responsibility to disclose this to the Field Education Officer and a risk management process will then be initiated. 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 in New South Wales. It is the responsibility of all students to inform the field education office of any changes to their criminal status throughout their candidature.

All students also hold a Working with Children’s Check number. It is the responsibility of the agency to verify the Working with Children’s Check status on the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian website and to conduct any additional checks their agency requires. Any student who has concerns about this requirement should consult with the Field Education Officer.

Vaccination and infection control

Any student who undertakes placement in a NSW Health funded facility is required to be verified with the ClinConnect system and provide evidence of screening and vaccinations. Please see the NSW Health Department circular, which can be accessed at [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au). A large proportion of placements are in NSW Health funded agencies, for example Hospitals, Community Health Centres and other agencies/organisations that receive funding from NSW Health. Students who are not verified with ClinConnect will not be eligible to be placed in a NSW Health funded facility.

Negotiation and allocation of placement

Placements are negotiated by university field education staff, primarily the Field Education Officer. Staff 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 the Field Education Officer 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, negotiation will be carried out on an individual basis as determined by field education staff.
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 it is usual that a second attempt will be made to locate a suitable alternate agency. If however the student is unsuccessful on their second interview, consideration will be given as to whether the student should continue in the field education program and whether there are mitigating circumstances that allow for further agencies to be located. Feedback regarding unsuccessful interviews will always be communicated to the student as soon as possible in the process.

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 as consumers of educational services. It also has responsibilities to the social work profession, the agency offering the placement, their clients, staff and others. Recognition of the rights of the student has to 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 field education staff receive information that indicates that a student may be behaving unprofessionally or acting inappropriately, or there may be a risk of harm to any party (including the student), the Manager Field Education may decide not to allocate a student to an agency, or may withdraw a student from an agency during the course of the placement.
3. Structure of field education placements

Timing of field placements

After consultation about a student's particular interests and specific learning goals, the university matches the student to a human services agency, taking into consideration any special needs of the student and the AASW requirements for field education. 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 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 (SOCW3011) - Year 3, Semester 1

70 days (490 ‘working’ hours) plus university based integration seminars throughout the duration of the placement. Placement pattern is 4 days per week at the external agency, starting at the beginning of February. Students undertake a co-requisite academic course at university on the fifth day on the fifth day until the end of semester in June.

Social Work Practice Level 4 Placement (SOCW4010) - Year 4, Semester 2

75 days (525 ‘working’ hours) plus university based integration seminars throughout the duration of the placement. Placement pattern is 4 days per week at the external agency, starting in mid-July. Students undertake a co-requisite Honours Component at university on the fifth day until the end of semester in November.

External Supervision

In the event that insufficient numbers of qualified social workers are available to supervise students, a small number of students may be placed in human service agencies under the daily supervision of a person having qualifications other than social work. In this instance, External Supervision from a qualified social worker will be provided at the University throughout the placement.

External Supervision is provided fortnightly to provide 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 either individually, in a group setting or remotely. The UNSW External Supervisor is in regular contact with the Manager Field Education and the Field Education Officer, as well as the relevant Liaison Tutor who is monitoring the student's progress at the agency. Students who attend External Supervision on top of their placement hours, are able to deduct equivalent hours from their placement total plus 1 hour transport time. (e.g. 2 hour External Supervision = 3 placement hours). This time is to be taken in explicit negotiation with the Field Educator.

Placements outside Sydney

Rural, remote and interstate

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 organised individually with field education staff as early as possible before the placement start date.

Occasionally, if students are going to move interstate upon graduation, a Level 4 Placement may be arranged through a university in that state (however university staff are mindful that other states have a priority to locate placements for their own students). Students should alert the Field Education Officer early in the semester preceding the placement if they are considering undertaking a rural, regional or interstate placement.

Due to concurrent classroom subjects this is not possible for Level 3 placements, however greater Sydney areas such as Newcastle, Gosford, the Blue Mountains and Wollongong placement locations will be considered.
International placements

Under special circumstances, students may apply to undertake their Level 4 Placement through overseas institutions with which the Social Work Program has formal agreements. Currently, an agreement exists with the University of Stockholm in Sweden and additionally it is possible to arrange a non-traditional outbound placement in the Madras School of Social Work in India. An agreement with the Regina University in Canada is pending. Students are not permitted to negotiate their own international placement.

Students can be considered for an International Placement only if:

1. Their Level 3 placement was completed without any concerns in performance having been identified.
2. Their Level 3 placement was completed locally.
3. They have an approximate credit average WAM in classroom based practice courses.
4. Academic and field education staff have no concerns regarding the students’ ability to successfully undertake an International Placement and to conduct themselves in a mature and professional manner.

Please note: students must bear the costs of travel, accommodation and other costs levied including supervision fees by the host university and/or placement agency and the UNSW Global Education Office. Students are required to enrol in SOCW4010 and pay the required fees for this course.

Procedure for international placements

Students must submit in writing their request to undertake an International Placement to the International Placement Coordinator by 1st October of the preceding year. Their request must include a rationale as to the educational benefits of undertaking a placement overseas. The Student’s Level 3 End Placement Report and academic transcript will be accessed and reviewed by the field education team when their application is considered. The student will be notified about the outcome of their application within two weeks. When approval is received the student must contact the Global Education Office to which they must apply to indicate their intention to undertake an International Placement as an Outbound Exchange Student. This will entail completing documentation for the Global Education Office and the payment of a fee to cover costs associated with visa arrangements and orientation.

When undertaking an International Placement students are representing this university and therefore must be conscious of appropriate professional behaviour including awareness of cultural differences. In negotiating an International Placement, the student’s learning needs and interests are communicated to the overseas host 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 ASWEAS (AASW, 2013). However, exceptions can be made if the field education staff are 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 must seek approval from the Manager Field Education as early as possible before the commencement date of the placement.
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 could be more formal internships. 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.

If a student applies directly to an agency in this situation and the student is not successful in their application, the student will then go back into the general pool for field placements.

Variation of placement arrangements

Variation of placement dates

Field placements are integrated with the rest of the BSW 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 Field Education Officer, at times in consultation with the Manager Field Education. The following factors need to be considered by the Field Education Officer in reaching a decision to approve a variation of placement dates.

- Reason for request
- Implications for university requirements
- Resource implications for field education 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 Manager Field Education or the Field Education Officer.

The Manager Field Education’s decision will be conveyed to the student in writing after all of the above have been considered.

Agency initiated variation in placement hours

Where the agency has requested that the student starts earlier or later than the required date, the student will be consulted before arrangements are finalised. At times, this may be a matter to be taken into consideration when allocating the placement.
4. Assessment in Field Education

Assessment is ongoing in the placement and draws upon the Australian Association of Social Workers 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 Coordinator (Manager Field Education) 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 Manager Field Education consults fully with the student concerned, the Field Educator, the UNSW External Supervisor 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 Manager Field Education is responsible for ensuring that each placement is allocated a Liaison Tutor and that they liaise with the students and Field Educators during the placement. This Liaison contact includes individual discussions, telephone contact, email contact, placement visits and Integration Seminars. All placements are visited at least once (more if required by either party or both) by a Liaison Tutor. The purpose of a 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 commonly covered in visits are:

- The Learning Contract prepared by student and Field Educator
- Tasks in which the student has been involved
- The student’s progress during the placement
- The nature and structure of supervision
- The relationship between students, peers and agency staff
- Application of theory to placement tasks
- Issues identified by the student or Field Educator in relation to the placement
- Feedback to the university on the BSW Program and field education policy and procedures

Both Field Educators and students are expected to refer to the section in the Course Outline on the structure and preparation required for the visit. Field Educators or students may request an early visit or consultation to discuss any matter arising from the placement. A brief report of topics discussed and courses of action recommended is written at the end of each visit and signed by all parties.

Mid and End Placement Reports

In all placements, Field Educators and students are asked to provide written Mid and End Placement Reports on each student's performance. These reports are 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 can state this in their comments and if necessary also write a separate document. The Report is a confidential written communication between the Field Educator, the student and the university. The Report is read only by university staff involved in the current and subsequent placement. It is not to be used as a placement or job reference. All such reports are expected to be returned to the Social Work Program after the placement is completed. Each completed Mid and End Placement Report includes a recommended grade by the Field Educator of the student’s performance and whether it is ‘satisfactory’ or not. The Manager Field Education assigns the final grade for the placement and takes 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 Manager Field Education.

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 ‘deferred’ result and be required to undertake an extended placement. This decision is implemented when the student has made progress but there is uncertainty about the adequacy of performance in a specific area(s). The extension of the placement is regarded as ‘supplementary’ work to resolve doubt about the student’s performance, or to provide consolidation of recent learning.
3. If the student’s performance is assessed as ‘unsatisfactory’ (Fail - FL) then the student is required to repeat the placement in a different agency where performance is assessed anew.

**Student attendance requirements at placement**

In some rare instances, students may need to extend their placement to make up time lost due to illness or misadventure. In order to satisfy the AASW requirements for field placement the student will be expected to make up all of the days they are absent, regardless of the reason. However, there are limits on the ability of agencies and Field Educators to accommodate extensions. When an offer to take a student is made, it is on the understanding that the placement will finish on a particular date. Should an unforeseen situation arise, placement dates will need to be re-negotiated with Field Educators as soon as possible. If a student's absence is likely to be lengthy, this should be negotiated with the Field Educator and the Manager Field Education.

**Accrual of ‘overtime’**

During the placement, students can accrue limited ‘overtime’. Any overtime must be taken in consultation with the Field Educator and the university. In order to maximise self care and student learning, time in lieu must be taken as soon as possible following its accumulation (one hour worked equals one hour time in lieu). The placement may not be completed more than one week early as student learning can be compromised.

**Intellectual property and confidentiality**

In regards to intellectual property, students should be aware that:

The human services agency has made this placement available on condition that it has a claim to any intellectual property developed by you in the circumstances where the intellectual property:

a. has been created utilising substantial resources of the Agency;

b. is created as a result 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 as a result of funding provided by, or obtained by, the Agency.

If there is a possibility that the placement may result in you developing intellectual property on which the Agency may make a claim you should consider whether or not you wish to proceed with the placement and if so reach agreement as to how the rights in the intellectual property will be dealt with, including seeking independent legal advice. You should advise the Manager Field Education as soon as possible if you think this may apply to you. In addition both the student and the Liaison Tutor may be asked to sign a non-disclosure form or confidentiality agreement if the Agency has a concern related to Intellectual Property.

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

Students are not to use their mobile phones for personal reasons whilst undertaking placement tasks. If the student has a personal emergency which requires them to be in contact via their personal mobile phone, the process for this should be explicitly negotiated with their Field Educator. Under no circumstances is content regarding field 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 with which the student is placed and of their clients. If a student is found to be breaching confidentiality in their actions, consideration will be given as to whether the student is permitted to continue in the field education program. 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://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentcodepolicy.pdf.
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 that 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 Semester before Level 3 Placement each year (i.e. Semester 2). The selection criteria is:

- The applicant must be proposing to undertake the third year of the Bachelor of Social Work degree or a Bachelor of Social Work combined degree at UNSW.
- Each applicant will be assessed on the basis of their Years One and Two 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 had been so inspiring that it was deemed appropriate to establish a lasting commemoration of her in the form of a Certificate of Merit. This is to be 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 in the Social Work Program, field education, 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 on field placement

Occupational Health and Safety

The university has a responsibility to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its students for the duration of their placement. Agencies offering placement are required to advise students on Occupational 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 their safety or well-being, students should contact their Field Educator and university field education staff immediately. Information on relevant Occupational Health and Safety policies and expectations can be found at http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/

Insurance coverage for students on placement

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they are enrolled in placement subjects prior to the start of their placement. If a student sustains an injury on placement, they should contact the Field Education Officer as soon as possible. An insurance policy has been taken out by UNSW Australia to cover all enrolled students for personal accident. This policy operates 24 hours per day, 365 days per year and covers students for:

- travel to and from placement
- death or permanent disablement from injury
- temporary disablement

In addition, the university has appropriate insurance cover whereby organisations, the enrolled student and university are indemnified in the event that a student during the course of a placement becomes legally liable for injury caused by a negligent act to any person or damage to property related to the placement (other than property damage arising from the use of a motor vehicle). This policy includes claims made against an agency by clients in relation to error in handling cases and accidental loss or damage of property whilst on placement.

A Letter of Indemnity will be included with the placement material sent to Field Educators prior to the commencement of the placement. If a placement is commenced early or extended beyond the prescribed finishing date, the agency will have to apply to the field education office for a variation of insurance coverage.

Transport and travel to placement

Students will be expected to travel to places that are relatively distant from campus and their residences in order to benefit from a range of placement experiences. The student’s learning goals and placement experience will take priority over the distance of placement.

The cost of travel to and from placement is to be met by students. Travel and sundry items of expenditure connected with 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 on field placement

Student self-care issues

On the whole, students find their 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 (e.g. stress experienced as a result of the behaviour of agency staff and/or clients) or outside the placement (e.g. health/family/personal issues etc). These issues can affect not only a student's ability to perform during the placement but also can have an impact on 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 Liaison Tutor or the Manager Field Education. If an issue has arisen on placement that is causing the stress then the student should be discussing the issue with their Field Educator as well.

Withdrawal from field education courses

If a student intends to withdraw from a placement then they are required to notify the Manager Field Education as soon as possible and discuss the reasons for their withdrawal and formally make an application for withdrawal. This includes students who wish to withdraw from a placement without penalty. Students are to consider and discuss the implications of withdrawal from placement on the rest of their program with the Social Work Student Advisor.

Field Education appeals and grievance structure

Any problems or concerns that arise in the placement are to be addressed as early as possible. If a student wishes to appeal their Placement Grade, the process is as follows:

1. Manager Field Education determines Placement Grade.
2. Academic Field Education Consultant hears student appeal and either upholds original grade or makes alternate determination.
3. Head of School (or Bachelor of Social Work Convener in their place) hears further student appeal and makes final determination of placement grade.

Other University assistance

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

- For BSW program information: www.handbook.unsw.edu.au
- The university provides information for students regarding issues of equity and student's rights at university. Those students who have a disability that requires some adjustment to their learning environment are encouraged to discuss their Diversity Unit (9385 4734). Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made. For more information: http://www.Studentequity.unsw.edu.au/
- The Hub student Participation Advisor service (9385 9365) http://www.studentlifelearning.unsw.edu.au provides a free and confidential Welfare and Study related service.
- The UNSW Counselling and Psychological Services Unit (9385 5418) provides a free and confidential counselling service www.counselling.unsw.edu.au
- 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
- Indigenous students are encouraged to link up with the Aboriginal Education program (9385 3805) http://www.nuragili.unsw.edu.au

The UNSW Code of Conduct can be found at https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct
8. UNSW Graduate Certificate of Supervision in field education in Social Work

Graduate list 1997-2014

Congratulations to the following Practitioners who have completed the UNSW Graduate Certificate of Supervision in field education in Social Work.

2014

Anna Avoledo
Sophie Bell
Paul Roland Bottrill
Katherine Cameron
Laura Carroll
Elizabeth Marie Ceissman
Emily Coote
Pauline Coulton
Alison Crane
Bonita Maree Deighton
Janine Doran
Sarah Eagland
Sarah Firman
Clare Fitzmaurice
Katrina Gersbach
Donna Habak
Nicola Haig
Courtney Hendry
Sonia Hoffmann
Peter John Stuart Hogg
Rachael King
Barbara Sau Ping Lee

2011

Jeannine Lew
Alana Martin
Amy McDiarmid
Nicola McEwen
Deborah Joy McTaggart
Julia Norman
Rachael Owen
Rodney David Painter
Magda Read
Samuel Charles Horder
Deborah Jane Scott
Shelley Liqiong Sha
Yvonne Solomou
Monica Soto Quezada
Jessica Sowden
Nicole Tillotson
Helen Bridget Tonkin
Simon Joseph Tully
Helen Warren
Julie Ann Webster
Diane Maria Wood

2010

Clare Ching
Dominica Dalton
Kay De Ridder
Michelle Evans
Najeba Nally Fear
Michele Fraser
Amy Gentle
Michelle Gilad
Claire Frances Gillis
Michelle Gravolin
Laura Hagan
Maria Elisa Hollero
Michael A. Hopkins
Nicole Hraiki
Hanh Hong Huynh (Helen)
Anthony Kearns
Amber Koppi
Lynette Krimmer
Elisabeth Long Rosa Loria
Maria Merle
Tiffany Nahi
Ruth Nemesh
Patricia Nesbit
Rachael Owen
John Edward Payne
Samantha Rennie
Anne Robinson-Cast
Louise Scuderi
Stanya Sharota
Laraine Smith
Danielle Smith
Samantha Elke Thompson
Dragana Zekanovic

2009

Anastasia Anastasiou
Paul Joseph Anderson
Natalie Ang
Jet JC Aserios
Julia Burke
Alejandra Orietta Camps
Scott Crehan
Helen Alleyne Dawson
Swapna Deshmukh
Jale Dilek
Pip Ditzell
Lisa Fawkner
Marlene Martinez Gilbert
Emma Hair
Robyn (Bobbi) Henao Urrego
Brian Jones

2008

Nour Abdo
Sarina Browne

UNSW Social Work Field Education Manual (June 2015)
Jae McCarron
Toni McMahon
Biljana Milosevic
Dallas Nolan
Etieron W. Parkes
Natasha Parodi
Isabella Jacqueline Ponder
Jade Marie Rodrigues
Emma Louise Sexton
Gay Margaret Shanahan
Adele Sheridan-Magro
Lo-Shu Wen

2007
Nancy Anvieh
Ruth Puja Brunner
Sarah Carlton
Robyn Joy Clucas
Roslyn Crowe-Mai
Jennifer Helen Drayton
Amalin Elmohamad
Angelique Fernandes
Carolyn M. Fettes
Paula Adriana Galarza
Rocio Lizbeth Garcia
Rosa Yaneth Garcia-Gamez
Jakki Gescheit
Vicky Giakoumidis
Angela Jane Grayling
Lisa Green
Mary Haiek
Belinda Hocking
Melina Isgro-Rarp
John William Jones
Sarah Joy
Emmanuel Kassiotis
Stacey Roma Kennon
Sofia Mazeed
Greer McGee
Bharati Mehta
Jackie Meyer
Grace Micali
Jo-Anne Pogorelsky
Jennie Pratt Nidhi Sharma
Dafna Stern
Theresa Tasende
Geral Wallwork
Helen Xiros

2005
Tammy Bedford
Danielle Beston
Kim Bonnici
Kerryn Brooks
Alexandra Burgess
Sekai Burgess
Nicole Burke
Gail Chandler
Annette Cowan
Debbie Cumpstone
Simone Czech
Juliana De Bellis
Jackie Dettmann
Francis Duffy
Leola Farnell
Jackie Francis
Jane French
Debbie Hand
Matt Heyburgh
Amy HoTanya Katalinic
Christina Macarounas
Sony Muller|Susana Ng
Matt O’Neill
Jackie Parsons
Cherryl Paulus
Lara Perrett
Daniella Pfeiffer
Richard Prunty
Heather Redman
Sony Robson
Andrea Small
Debbie Szorenyi
Siesi Jessie Tangilapa
Antonina Trovato
Karen Vidal
Anne Walsh
Kristy Walsh
Jo Wigan

2003
Rachel Andrikidis
Kathryn Allen
Leo Barreto
Carolyn Begg
Elena Bellinato
Theodora Bikou
Jennifer Brain
Lee Bratel
Melissa Leigh Byrnes
Teresa Callaghan
Roxana Castro
Claudine Lisette Coleman
Angela Cotroneo
Jacqui Cousins
Marcia Cunningham
Joanne Deanne
Jenny Deighton Shapcott
Sandra De Marchi
Patrick Dunn
Melveta Ellwood
Pamela Mary Evans
Tali Foreman
Robyn Frame
Karen Anne Gabriel
Monika Hammerle
Nicole Hair
Rachael Hanning
Baringa Head
Annette Jones
Katrina Knight
Philippa Lam
Kate Lenthen
Laura McBlain
Heather McGillivray
Suzanne Mouwen
Pamela E.K. Nance
Suzi Pagan
Betty Patsalis
Karen Podmore
Ayman Qasem
Fabiola Rafael
Katie Rowell
Sally Simpson
Caitlin Stewart
Lynette Tadros
Ngan Cheung Bridget Tam
Dylan Thompsett
Chris Zisopoulos

**2001**
Lesley Brown
Tania Chahoud
Christene Cole
Kate Daley
Carmel Darcey
Karen Doherty
Amanda Fossey
Keith Godfrey
Gizell Hanna
Michelo Harris
Dianne Hudson
Joanna Iliopoulos
Janice Jones
Sylvia Karan
Angela Lancuba
Siobhan Langford
Su-Lyn Lee
Brenda Lennox
Elizabeth Ann McCabe
Lorraine Merheb
Sarah Morgan
Mary Anne Murphy
Patsy Pynn
Christine Raisin
Edward Reid
Patricia Reid
Julie Robinson
Will Roden
Jennifer Sandbrook
Lisa Shanahan
Michael Synnot
Lydia Trifunov
Diane Turner
Janet Urquhart
Christine Wearing

**1999**
Heather Aldis
Dianne Maree Atkins
Patricia Bacik
Loreto Bartos
Marian Booleer
Margery Clark
Marnie Elizabeth Coghlan
Elizabeth Colebrook
Belinda Cooley
Makare Costello
Kathryn Crow
Selma Deverimol
Yvonne Dewar
Elena-Betti Gosarevski
Brett Haddon
Juliette Hannon
Sophia Haramis
Colleen Haughey
Stephan Heike
Maria Hole
Janine Hornby
Bruna Johnson
Venus Kazantsis
Janet Keller
Therese King
Lucy Naughton
Vicki Ruhfus
Teresa Wai Kwan Simpson
John Stanley
Bernadette Sweeney
Catherine Taylor
Catherine Tulinsky
Cheryl Webster
Marion M. Williams
Peggy Yeomans
Kenny Kai Lai Yuen

**1998**
Robyn Alexander
Abdul Wahab Anang
Marie Anderson
Bernard Boerma
Kristen Burriel
Richard Byrne
Raema Decent

Eda Devoti
Antonia Dounias
Paul Julian Peter Eyland
Danielle Fisher
Julie Jackson
Stacey Jane Lewis
Katherine Maloney
Janice Nair
Philippa Naivasha
Karen Oxenbury
Mario Viera
Victoria Worledge

**1997**
Zareena Anantharaman
Naomi Bando
Louise Beat
Linda Brooks
Selena Elizabeth Consandine
Elizabeth Cox
Julia Ivy Crowe
Neeta M Desai
Carmen Gonzalez
Stan Greaves
Karyn Horsley
Maite Kaehler
Jill C Kennedy
Richard Thomas Lewandowski
Marina Lupish
Louise Martello
Christine Murphy