



Professional Practice Experience Handbook

2021 Nursing Students



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Welcome to Clinical Placement at the University of Southern Queensland

Clinical placement is about integrating what you have learnt in theory and putting it into practice in the real world of health care. This is an exciting time and also one that we recognise can cause stress to students. To make sure you are well prepared this handbook provides information about the minimum standards that students are required to meet to be successful in their clinical placement.

To meet the registration requirements of the approved program curriculum, nursing students must successfully complete 840 clinical hours within the 6 clinical courses offered in the program.

All students enrolled in the Bachelor of Nursing (BNSG) degree are registered with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Authority (AHPRA). This provides some very clear legislative requirements for students regarding their conduct, practice and fitness. This Handbook outlines the expected conduct for all students while on their placement. It is within the right of the University and the Health Facility to stop a placement if these guidelines are not followed.

What students **MUST** know about clinical placement

- ✦ The [Nursing Professional Practice Hub \(NUR:PPHub\)](#) is where you will find all the forms, links and information you require to prepare for your clinical placements. It can be found with your other study desks on **UConnect** under 'Other'. It is important that you use this site to support your success.
- ✦ Good preparation is key to success.
- ✦ Mandatory documents **MUST** be completed and submitted via InPlace by the due dates provided or you risk being dropped from the placement course.
- ✦ Placements are allocated after preferencing closes for the semester, based on available places, student enrolment, mandatory document submission, student requests, and post code match where possible.
- ✦ Local placements are within one hour drive of where you live but students may be required to travel further than this to an allocated placement.
- ✦ If you work in a health facility, you must advise the Professional Experience Placements Team (PEPT) via InPlace as soon as you are employed or with any employment changes.
- ✦ Important placement information will be communicated to you via **email, InPlace and the NUR:PPHub**. Make sure you check these regularly.
- ✦ Students must keep a copy of all their placement assessment documents, timesheets and makeup requirements throughout their placements. The Examiner and PEPT do not retain copies.
- ✦ Students studying through Geraldton Universities Centre (GUC) in Western Australia may have some different requirements, if in doubt, please check with your Clinical Coach.

Signing the Student Declaration at the end of this handbook as part of your mandatory documents, indicates that you have read, understood and agree to act within the guidelines provided.

The Professional Experience Placements Team (PEPT)

The Professional Experience Placements Team consists of Clinical Placement Officers and Professional Experience staff in Toowoomba and Ipswich. This team allocates the clinical placements and can help you with any questions or problems about preparing for and attending a clinical placement.

You can contact staff face-to-face, or via phone or email. Nursing students enrolled through Geraldton Universities Centre can contact either the Geraldton campus for assistance or the Toowoomba campus. External students, please contact the Toowoomba campus.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS OFFICES:

Toowoomba

Location: Level 1 W Block

Email: clinical@usq.edu.au

Phone: 07 4631 2974

Ipswich

Location: Level 2 I Block

Email: clinical@usq.edu.au

Phone: 07 4631 2974

Geraldton

Location: 33 Onslow St, Geraldton

Email: reception@guc.edu.au

Phone: 08 9920 4400

The Academic Team

The Academic Team consists of the Clinical Course Examiners, Supervisors, Facilitators and the Clinical Education Lead. Your course examiners contact details will be included in the course Clinical Guides.

Deputy Head of School - Clinical:

Professor Victoria Terry

Phone: 07 4631 2377

Email: Victoria.Terry@usq.edu.au

Clinical Coordinator - Ipswich

Dr Kamal Singh

Phone: 07 3812 6329

Email: kamal.singh@usq.edu.au

Geraldton Universities Centre (GUC) contact:

Geraldton

Mrs Amanda Clarkson (Clinical Coach)

Phone: 08 9920 4400

Email: amandac@guc.edu.au

Rural Placement Support:

Mrs Emma Turner (Lecturer - Clinical)

Phone: 07 4631 5346

Email: Emma.Turner@usq.edu.au

NUR:PPHub Rural Placement Information Discussion Forum

For safety concerns or emergencies that arise after hours or in the event of a critical incident, if you are distressed, or have been involved in any emergency, please phone: 1300 998 236

Student registration obligations

Registered Nurses are governed by national legislation, the **Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009**. The role of the Nursing and Midwifery Board under this national law is to protect the public. The National Law clearly states what is required of the University, and of the student, to ensure compliance for all students attending clinical placements. This obligation means *students must be fit to practice and must act within the guidelines of the law while on clinical placements*.

Section 90 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009, is about the registration of Bachelor of Nursing students. Students are registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in their first semester of study. At USQ this occurs after the Census Date. Students' registration expires at 'the end of the day on which the student completes, or otherwise ceases to be enrolled in, the approved program of study' (Section 90. P 128 Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act, 2009).

To comply with the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009, there are requirements that **MUST** be met by the University and each student to ensure patient safety and legislative compliance are met.

An education provider is required under the National Law to notify AHPRA if they reasonably believe:

- *a student enrolled in a program of study provided by the education provider has an impairment that, in the course of the student undertaking clinical training as part of the program of study, may place the public at substantial risk of harm; or*
- *a student for whom an education provider has arranged clinical training has an impairment that, in the course of the student undertaking clinical training, may place the public at substantial risk of harm.*

Information provided from Section 143 National Legislation 2009.

Students have an obligation under the National Law to notify AHPRA within seven days if:

- *They have been charged with an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more or*
- *They have been convicted of, or are the subject of, a finding of guilt for an offence punishable by imprisonment or*
- *Their registration under the law of another country that provides for the registration of students has been suspended or cancelled.*

Scope of Practice

The **scope of practice** for nursing students is what undergraduate students are educated, skilled and authorised to perform. The scope of a student's practice is influenced by:

- ✦ Their progress within the nursing degree
- ✦ The health care needs of the clinical learning environment
- ✦ The level of acuity of the patient/client in the health care setting

As an undergraduate nursing student, the scope of practice changes through your degree. The course examiner for the clinical course in which you are enrolled will provide the guidelines for your current scope of practice.

- ✦ **Student nurses** are required to work under the supervision of a registered nurse at all times and adhere to hospital policies particularly in relation to drug administration.

It is up to you to make sure that you understand and work within these guidelines when on placement. Students who practice outside of their current scope of practice may receive a **fail grade**.

Reading and becoming familiar with the below Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) documents will ensure you are following professional and ethical guidelines in practice. These can be obtained via the links below or via the links on the [Nursing: Professional Practice Hub](#).

[Registered Nurse Standards for Practice 2016](#)

[Code of Conduct for Nurses \(1 March 2018\)](#)

[Code of Ethics for Nurses \(1 March 2018\)](#)

Social Media

You are advised to read the AHPRA [Social Media: How to meet your obligations under the National Law guide](#) (November 2019).

SOCIAL MEDIA: As a student you are not to post **any** information about your clinical placement, patients, the facility or your fellow students or anything else related on any social media forum. You may be dismissed from placement if anything posted contravenes any of the laws or codes that apply.

How this might impact your clinical placements

- ✦ **Complying with the legislation:** The 'Student Declaration' is the last page of this handbook. You are required to sign and submit this at the start of each year once this handbook is updated for the year. By signing this document, you are informing USQ and the health facility that you
 - fulfill all the conditions of the legislation
 - you will abide by the requirements
 - you do not have any of the limitations discussed in this handbook or in any of the legislation or codes that have been discussed as ***it is YOUR responsibility to make sure this is correct.***
- ✦ **Safety for Placement:** You must provide a Working with Children Card (WWC) (or relevant AHPRA registration in Qld only) and an Australian Federal Police Check prior to undertaking placement. These check for any charges recorded against you. If you have a charge against you, it will be raised with the Clinical Education Lead in the first instance. If something happens which could result in your WWC card or Police Certificate being cancelled (e.g. a criminal charge), you need to inform AHPRA within seven days. You also need to let USQ know that you are no longer able to go on placement.
- ✦ **Fitness for clinical placement:** Sometimes your situation or health could change over the course of your studies. This can impact on whether or not you are still able to meet the conditions. If your situation does change, please notify either your Course Examiner or the PEPT or, in Geraldton the GUC Clinical Coach, to discuss whether or not you are 'fit for placement'. Most of the time you will be asked to obtain a medical clearance from your doctor that says you are fit to go on placement. You can also seek advice and guidance from an USQ Equity Officer at disabilitysupport@usq.edu.au
- ✦ **Pregnancy:** If you become pregnant during the course of your study, you will not be able to do a placement for 6 weeks either side of your estimated due date. You must notify the PEPT prior to placement release date for the semester so you can be placed at an appropriate time. Include a letter from your doctor with your estimated due date and advice on your fitness to do placement and upload this to InPlace as a special consideration request. If you are planning a pregnancy, you will need to have your required immunisations before you become pregnant. If you have not been immunised or don't have immunity and are already pregnant, you may not be able to have some immunisations until further into your pregnancy. Please get in touch with the PEPT to discuss these and make a plan that may allow you to still do your placement.



Your health and wellbeing is important to us at USQ. We want to assist you in meeting the clinical needs of your course. To do this, we need to hear from you when a health condition/disability, mental health related issue or other situation occurs that may affect your placements.

Student services at USQ offers support if required. Please see the services available on the [Student support page on the USQ website.](#)

Eligibility for clinical placements

For students to be eligible to go on placement they must:

- ✦ Pass the pre-requisite courses for the placement course/s
- ✦ Enroll in the clinical course
- ✦ Submit/update all mandatory documents within timeframes
- ✦ Be allocated a placement
- ✦ Prepare for orientation and any facility specific requirements

Pre requisite courses and Enrollment: Contact **Student Support** or your Student Relationship Officer (SRO) if you have questions about your course progression, pre-requisites for clinical placement courses or if you are having trouble enrolling in your courses. You can email them on usq.support@usq.edu.au.

Geraldton (GUC) students must discuss progression issues with the Nursing Academic Coordinator and the Clinical Coach.

If you happen to *fail a pre-requisite* course for a clinical course in which are already enrolled, you will be removed from the clinical course *according to USQ Pre-Requisite procedure*. If you are already undertaking placement, you may be asked to leave your placement. This does not apply to incomplete grades for pre-requisite courses. Any completed hours in this situation, *will not* be counted towards your overall clinical hour requirements.

Plan ahead and be well prepared for your placement.



Clinical Calendar and Important Dates

Clinical calendar

A Clinical Calendar is provided each year on the [NUR:PPHub](#). It includes all of the six clinical courses and the dates of each block or integrated placement. It includes a calendar for each semester so you can get a better understanding of when you might be allocated a clinical placement. This helps you with submitting preferences (P.14) and planning your placement around residential schools and other university related activities.

Please be aware however that while the PEPT tries to work with student preferences for blocks, there is no guarantee that it will be possible to provide you with your preferred placement.

You are expected to be available for placement at any time in the semester including mid semester breaks and exam weeks, so please remember this when you are making personal plans.

Important dates

It is important that you plan and prepare for your placements and to help you do this, the PEPT provide an '[important dates](#)' document each year. This is available on the [NUR:PPHub](#).

You will find the dates for anything related to preparing for placement in the Important Dates document including:

- ✦ When mandatory documents must be updated for each semester
- ✦ When placement preferences are open on InPlace for each course
- ✦ When placement allocations will be released on InPlace for you to view
- ✦ Dates for Clinical Bursary applications to be submitted

Please read this document for clarification on when everything is due for your placements.

Please note: Do not wait for the semester you are enrolled in a clinical placement to start preparing. Self-selecting rural placements, preferencing, special consideration submission and placement release all take place the semester before you are enrolled in a placement course.

Mandatory Document Information

Mandatory documents

These are documents that USQ is required by the health facilities to collect from each student and monitor to make sure they are completed and current for the duration of each placement. They **MUST** be provided and updated by you before each placement.

- ✦ *Monitoring these documents forms part of USQ's agreements with health facilities to provide placements and therefore if you have not submitted or updated all mandatory documents, you cannot attend placement*
- ✦ *At times USQ is required to provide some/all of your mandatory document information to the health facilities for placement purposes*

If the majority of your mandatory documents are not submitted/current when the placement allocation process begins each semester (P.15) you will not be allocated a placement until you have submitted the majority. This can impact on where you are allocated a placement and whether or not your preferences are still available when you are allocated a placement.

- ✦ *Start to prepare the semester before you are enrolled in a placement course*

The cut-off date for submission/updating of Mandatory documents each semester is included in the Important Dates document. This date is usually one week prior to the last day to withdraw from a course without financial costs in the semester of enrolment and after this if you have not submitted/updated ALL essential mandatory documents, you may be dropped from the placement course.

As placements at different sites and locations are limited, you should try to submit/update all mandatory documents **before preferencing closes** each semester for the best chance of being allocated your preferences.

The PEPT monitors mandatory documents closely when allocating placements. We recommend that you upload your documents as soon as you receive/complete them so that we can see that you are preparing for placement. Don't wait to receive all of your documents before starting to upload them to InPlace.

- ✦ *Look at the mandatory document requirements and work out how long it will take you to get everything you need – some can take 4 months and they must be completed before the cut-off date*

Students who submit their mandatory documents after placements have been released for the semester, will still be allocated a placement once their documents have been uploaded to InPlace and verified.

**If you are unsure or have questions, contact the PEPT early so they can help you
– don't leave it until the last minute!**

There is a list of mandatory documents on the next page.
All the links and documents required to assist you with
completing everything is on the [NUR:PPHub](#)

Mandatory Documents Checklist

To complete these documents go to the Mandatory Documents list on the [NUR:PPHub](#)

Working with Children check (6-12 weeks to obtain)

- Students are no longer required to fill a paper form and submit this to USQ
- All Qld Blue Card applications must be submitted by students electronically via the Blue Card portal
- See the Mandatory Documents List on NUR:PPHub for other state WWC links

✦ **Upload: Copy of WWC card OR QLD Students ONLY can provide relevant APHRA registration instead**

Australian Police Certificate

- 3 year expiry
- There is a list on the PPHub with accepted providers – make sure you use one of these

✦ **Upload: Copy of certificate**

USQ Student Declaration

- Handbook is updated at start of Semester 1 each year – review annually and sign declaration
- Document is located on the **last** page of this Handbook

✦ **Upload: Signed and witnessed Signature page at the start of each year**

CPR Certificate (Can take 2- 3 weeks to obtain certificate)

- Must be renewed each year
- Must be nationally accredited face to face training course

✦ **Upload: Copy of certificate**

Queensland Health Student Orientation Requirements

- Submit evidence only once
- Not required from GUC students

✦ **Upload: Student Orientation Checklist (2 pages)**

✦ **Upload: Deed Poll (Signature page only)**

Queensland Health iLearn Certificates

- 5 Certificates must be renewed annually
- Not required from GUC Students

✦ **Upload: Copy of each certificate**

Immunisations

✦ **Upload: USQ branded VPD form**

An accelerated Hepatitis B vaccination process (given in under 4 months) is NOT ACCEPTED

Influenza

- Must be obtained at the **start** of Flu Season each year (usually April) and must be for the flu season for that year
- You are required to provide evidence in April/May each year

✦ **Upload: Dated evidence of being injected with vaccine from provider during flu season only (invoice is not accepted)**

Tuberculosis Risk Assessment form

- Complete and submit prior to your first placement

✦ **Upload: Completed TB Risk Assessment form and further evidence of clearance if required**

GUC students ONLY: WA Department of Health - Criminal Record Screening card (takes 10-14 days to obtain)

- Obtain application form from National Criminal history Record Check (NCHRC)

✦ **Upload: Copy of Criminal Record Screening card**

USQ on campus Health Services in Toowoomba and Ipswich provide serology requests, bulk billed immunisations for students and they can complete your VPD form.

To book an appointment contact them on 4631 2372.

A USQ branded 'Vaccine Preventable Disease' (VPD) form (NUR:PPHub) must be completed by your Health Practitioner and submitted showing you have complied with all of the immunisation requirements as documented on the form.

✦ *GUC and Western Australian students ONLY to use VPD form labeled 'WA students'.*

InPlace – Placement Management System

[InPlace](#) is the cloud based placement system used by USQ to allocate and manage clinical placements. Once you enroll in a subject for your course, an InPlace file is automatically created for you within 24 hours. You can then log in using the above link and your USQ log in and password. There is also a link on the [NUR:PPHub](#).

- ✦ ***All of your mandatory documents must be uploaded on InPlace***
- ✦ Any other personal placement related activities e.g. preferences, special consideration requests, facility expressions of interest, accommodation and clinical bursary applications, are all done through InPlace
- ✦ Your placement allocation details will be on InPlace when these are released
- ✦ Your orientation information will be available through InPlace **two weeks** before placement starts
- ✦ Your placement status will be seen as 'confirmed' on InPlace. Once it is completed, this will be changed to 'completed' as a bulk process once or twice per year. This status has nothing to do with your grades or graduation eligibility so you will not be affected if it is not updated as soon as you complete the placement

There is a 10 minute [video](#) and written instructions on the [NUR:PPHub](#) for InPlace. These will tell you how to upload your documents, how to submit preferences and all other information related to using InPlace.

Using InPlace:

1. Watch the video and read the instructions on the [NUR:PPHub](#)
2. Use either **Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox** as your browser as InPlace may not work properly in Explorer
3. Your password and user name are the same as your other USQ login details
4. Upload your mandatory documents as soon as you receive them
5. When you upload your documents it sends a message to the PEPT to go in and 'verify' them
6. If there is something wrong with a document you upload it will be rejected and a message will be added explaining why – please read this message before contacting the PEPT
7. Make sure you check your documents a few days after uploading them to see if they have been verified as **yes or rejected**
8. The PEPT try to check and verify documents within a week of you uploading them but sometimes it might take longer in busy periods
9. Documents with expiry dates must be current for the **duration** of your placement (except Flu) – check the expiry dates before placements are released each semester. If your placement is not released you probably need to update one or more documents.

Before placement allocations are released

Types of nursing clinical placements

On the Clinical Calendar you will see dates for two types of clinical placement that are offered at USQ. These are block placement and integrated placements.

Block Placements

- ✦ A Block Placement takes place 5 days a week for the duration of the placement

Integrated Placements

- ✦ **Integrated Placements are only available in Toowoomba at present and have become more limited and therefore availability cannot be guaranteed**
- ✦ An Integrated Placement requires you to attend placement on 3 days a week for a five (5) to seven (7) week period
- ✦ To request an integrated placement to suit you, please submit your preferences on InPlace **prior to placements being allocated**

Geraldton Placements

- ✦ Placements will be block placements
- ✦ Discussions regarding placement and progression must be directed to the Nursing Academic Coordinator and the Clinical Coach

Students may be given a placement that requires them to travel.

If for extenuating reasons you are **NOT** able to do a placement a long distance from home, make sure you put your special consideration information in via InPlace **BEFORE placements are allocated** and include evidence to support your request in line with the 'Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances' policy. If this documentation is not completed, you must accept the placement offer, or be dropped from the clinical course. Depending on the time frame, this may incur a financial or academic penalty.

NEW OPPORTUNITY – Self-selectable placements!

If you would like the opportunity to have a rural or remote placement experience you can choose a self-selectable placement when these become available on InPlace. You will need to be enrolled in the course to be able to select a placement. You might even be able to do 2 placements back to back.

- ✦ This is not usually available for first year NUR1299 placements or for GUC students.
- ✦ You will need to apply via InPlace during the dates this process is available. The dates are on the Important Dates document which is available on the [NUR:PPHub](#).
- ✦ It will only be available for students who have all mandatory documents provided via InPlace.
- ✦ Requests will be assessed by the PEPT and if approved, placement details will be confirmed on InPlace at the time of approval enabling early planning.
- ✦ Contact the PEPT with questions via clinical@usq.edu.au or find more information on the NUR:PPHub

Before placement allocations are released each semester (continued)

Preferences

In Semesters 1 and 2, nursing students have the opportunity to provide four preferences for approved regions across Queensland, where you would like to be placed for your clinical placements. You also have the opportunity to provide preferences for your preferred block or integrated placements. This is not mandatory and students who choose not to do this will not be penalised and will still be allocated a placement. For some popular placement areas you must make sure you have put in a preference for a placement as there are limited spots in most health facilities e.g. Toowoomba and Ipswich

The PEPT does try to allocate you to a facility within one of these regions for your placement but there is no guarantee that you will be successful in being placed where/when you requested. Placement allocation depends on a number of factors including submission/updating mandatory documents (P.10), the number of students who request in the same location and the number of placements that USQ was allocated by the facilities in that region.

Preferencing takes place early in the semester before you are enrolled in placement and is only open for a short timeframe each semester. You can only provide your preferences during the dates when this process is available on InPlace (P.12). These dates are on the Important Dates document. The PEPT does not accept preferences in any other way or at any other time than through this process.

Preferencing is not offered in Semester 3 due to limited placement options during this semester and preferences cannot be taken into consideration.

Please note that preferencing is not available to GUC based students.

Facility Expression of Interest

If you have an interest in attending a particular facility, you will be able to lodge a **Facility Expression of Interest** against the course code you have enrolled in via [InPlace](#). Expressions of interests will only be accepted during the preferencing period and will be second priority to your regions preferred.

‘Special Considerations’

BNSG students have the opportunity to provide information that might impact on when or where you are able to do placement. You have a responsibility to submit special consideration requests for any particular need you have for placement or factors that may restrict where/when you can attend placement e.g. *advising that you work in a particular health facility and therefore cannot do placement there, restrictions on when/where you can do placement, pregnancy restrictions or family support needs.*

Your requests need to be in line with the ‘[Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances](#)’ policy and you must provide evidence to support your request, such as a letter from an employer or doctor.

- ✦ Your **special consideration requests** can only be submitted on InPlace after you have enrolled in the placement course and must be submitted for each placement course to allow the PEPT to track them. They must be submitted **prior** to the planned date for placement release to be taken into consideration. It cannot be guaranteed that requests can be met but the PEPT try to take these into consideration.
- ✦ If you **work in a health facility**, you must let the PEPT know prior to placement release as you may not be able to do a placement there.
- ✦ If you become **pregnant** during your course and are due to do a placement, you **MUST** notify the PEPT. Please submit a special consideration request **prior to placements being allocated** and include a letter from your doctor with your estimated due date.
- ✦ Students are not to source their own placements – there is a risk of failing if you do so.

Before placement allocations are released each semester (continued)

Rural and remote placements

There are exciting opportunities for students to attend placements at facilities in rural or remote towns. Most of the rural and remote sites have accommodation provided onsite or in the town by SQRH. This can be a great opportunity for people who don't drive as they can then organise public transport via a bus trip to the town and stay locally for the duration of their placement. There may be a cost associated at some sites (\$75 per week at present).

Most students have a wonderful experience on rural placements and get to experience opportunities that they would not be exposed to in urban areas. Students also receive great support from the academic team during these placements. Please review the information on the [NUR:PPHub](#) under the 'Rural Placement Information' section and consider putting in a preference for placement at one or more of these sites.

There is also support available from [Southern Queensland Rural Health](#) with the opportunity to apply for funding to assist with the costs of attending a placement away from your home.

Students in states outside Queensland and Western Australia

Students who live in states outside Queensland and are non-GUC students, and who wish to do placement locally, must submit a special consideration request to the PEPT via clinical@usq.edu.au at least the semester before they are enrolled in a clinical placement course. This is to allow the PEPT the best opportunity to source a local placement for you. It can be difficult to obtain placements in other states so be aware that you may have to travel to other locations in your home State or Territory or to Queensland for some/all of your placements if we are unable to source them locally for you.

Placement allocation process

Once Preferencing is completed each semester, the Professional Experience Placement Team (PEPT) begin allocating placements. Students who have worked hard to prepare for placement and have submitted all or most of their mandatory documents or who have kept their mandatory documents current for the upcoming semester are usually allocated placement first and are therefore more likely to be allocated to one of their preferences. Special consideration requests are also taken into consideration at this point which is why it is important for you to submit them early.

- **There is an expectation that you will be able to travel to a placement in this program if required**

USQ consider that a placement within one hours drive of your address (as per Google maps) to be a local placement and this is the standard by which placements are allocated. **This only applies to Queensland and GUC students.** This does not mean you will definitely be allocated a placement within this radius from your home as we do not receive unlimited placements within any facility and therefore it depends on the availability of placements as well.

- **You may be automatically allocated a rural or remote placement or a placement away from home. If there are no other placement options available or you do not meet the review of allocation criteria, then you will be expected to undertake the placement allocated, regardless of location.**

The important dates document available on your NUR: PPHub site provides you with the dates when placement allocations will be released for each semester.

The next section of this clinical handbook covers everything that happens after your placement is released and before you attend your placement.

After placement allocations are released

Placement release process

Placement allocations will become visible on the login page of your InPlace file on the placement release date, if you have submitted at least 8 of your mandatory documents (including Working with Children check, VPD form and Flu vaccine). A message is also posted on the NUR: PPHub forum advising students of placement release and any information around this to support the placement release. This message is important for you to read and understand as it includes any new processes, placement swap information (one or two week timeline), clinical bursary application dates and anything else that relates to the placement release.

Step 1: Your placement details will be released on the allocated release date if:

- ✦ At least 8 of your mandatory documents (including Working with Children check, VPD form and Flu vaccine) are submitted via InPlace

Step 2: Your placement details will be hidden again after the end of the one to two week swap period:

- ✦ If all of your documents are submitted/updated, your placement will remain visible
- ✦ If you have not submitted/updated **all** documents so that they are current for the duration of your allocated placement your placement details will be hidden again but your placement will remain allocated to you.

Step 3: Once you have updated all of your documents and they have been verified by the PEPT

- ✦ Your placement details will be made visible again and your placement is approved for you to attend.

How this process assists students:

Planning for your placement

It can be difficult to keep your mandatory documents up to date and current for the semester ahead, so this process allows you to see your placement details earlier than you might have otherwise done. You can plan residential schools and labs around placement and organise family or work commitments to fit in around your placement.

- **Take a screenshot of your placement details so you still have this information if your placement is hidden again**

Swapping placements

Students who feel that their allocated placement does not suit them, can use the opportunity of knowing where their placements are to try to swap their placement with another student who is enrolled in the same placement course for the same semester. There will be swap forums available for each placement course on the NUR: PPHub and students can post requests to swap and connect with other students in the same situation.

Should you not be able to swap your placement with another student, you may be eligible to submit a 'Review of Placement Allocation' form (P.17) if you meet the criteria for this.

Updating mandatory documents

Knowing when you are allocated placement helps you to see which documents will expire while you are on placement which makes it easier to know what you need to update. In Semester 1 only, Flu vaccine and the Student Declaration may not be able to be updated until later in the semester as they are not available at that stage.

Please remember when placements are released that It CANNOT BE GUARANTEED that your preferences, facility expressions of interest and special consideration requests will be met as there are many factors that affect placement allocations

After Placement allocations are released (continued)

Student responsibilities

Please consider these when enrolling each semester to ensure you can meet expectations

All aspects of the placement apart from organising the placements, is **YOUR** responsibility. This includes:

- ✦ swapping or submitting placement allocation reviews if required
- ✦ arranging to attend the placement if you are unable to change the placement
- ✦ arranging child-minding
- ✦ organising and paying for any costs associated with parking, travel and accommodation
- ✦ rearranging private work commitments
- ✦ submitting clinical bursary or SQRH funding requests if required

If you do not accept the placement allocated to you, or withdraw or cancel a placement in an unacceptable timeframe, you will be administratively dropped from the clinical course and will need to enroll in the next semester that the placement is available. Depending on the timeframe, there may be a penalty associated with late withdrawals and cancellations of placement allocations.

Swap process

For one to two weeks after placements are released each semester, you have the opportunity to try to swap your placement with another student **if you feel it is unsuitable for you**. There will be 'swap forums' made available each semester on the NUR: PPHub for you to request another student who is enrolled in the same semester and in the same course as you, to swap their placement with yours.

If you wish to swap a placement with another student, both of you need to agree and each of you will need to send an email to clinical@usq.edu.au advising the PEPT and requesting that the swap be made. The swap will not be official until your InPlace file is updated with the change and you receive a response from the PEPT confirming the swap.

When placements are released, the PEPT put a post on the NUR: PPHub with information about the placements being released. This includes when review of placement allocations will become available for eligible students who have not been able to swap their placement.

Review of placement allocation

If you are given a placement which you feel is unsuitable, you should first try to swap with another student through the swap process. If you have been unsuccessful with this and you are eligible to submit a 'review of placement allocation request', you have 10 business days from when the 'Application for Review of an Allocated Clinical Placements (Extenuating Circumstances)' form becomes available on the NUR: PPHub **OR** 10 business days from your placement being released on InPlace to submit your request.

To be eligible to submit an application for review your reasons must meet the requirements of the [Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances Procedure](#). You must provide evidence against this policy to support your application – for example a letter from a doctor, an employer or a statutory declaration signed before a Justice of the Peace to support your application or another official document relevant to your request. This must be lodged via InPlace. The PEPT will not reallocate or change clinical placements without a request from you which includes evidence to support your request.

The review of allocation process is only available for Semester 1 and 2 placements. It does not guarantee your placement can or will be changed. You may need to attend your original placement.

After Placement allocations are released (continued)

Accommodation

Many Queensland Health rural and remote locations where you might be placed, have accommodation available for student's onsite. In some locations SQRH also have accommodation accessible for students.

The availability of accommodation can make it easier for students to be able to attend placement at these sites as it decreases the financial pressure of attending a rural placement, you will probably meet staff members or other students who are accommodated here and it can also help for students who don't drive or don't have a car.

There is usually public transport available through buses, trains or planes to get you to these locations and then because the accommodation is onsite, in most cases you will not have to find transport to the facility itself. You are able to submit an application for assistance either through the clinical bursary process or through SQRH to also assist with the cost of travel.

There is further accommodation information available on the [NUR:PPHub](#) advising you of locations where accommodation is usually available and how to apply for accommodation in each area where it is available. Once you receive your placement allocation, check the accommodation information and then if required, submit an application for accommodation via InPlace. This will be reviewed and you will be advised of the process from that point as it may be different for different sites.

There is not accommodation available in all areas where you might be allocated a placement. If you are allocated a placement that requires accommodation or travel, there are opportunities to apply for funding to assist (see below). GUC students please contact your Clinical Coach for accommodation information.

Clinical bursary application

Clinical Bursaries are available to assist nursing students who are undertaking their placement in **rural or remote areas away from where they usually reside**. They are also offered to assist **regional students to attend placement in a large metropolitan hospital**.

The bursaries are offered each semester and if you are eligible you can apply once your placements are released for the semester ahead. The closing date for application is in the 'important dates' document each semester and is also posted on the [NUR:PPHub](#) within the placement release post.

The applications are considered by a committee after the closing date. They will apply eligibility criteria and choose the successful students. Not everyone who applies will receive a bursary.

For more details on the bursary and eligibility criteria, please go to the 'Clinical Placement Bursary Information and Application Form' on the [NUR: PPHub](#).

Southern Queensland Rural Health

If you are a domestic student allocated to a South West Hospital and Health Service or Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service regions Rural Placement, [Southern Queensland Rural Health](#) (SQRH) support may be available to you.

SQRH offer accommodation in some areas in the South West Hospital and Health Service and Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service areas for students attending rural placements. For International students there will be a cost associated with SQRH accommodation.

They provide accommodation in Toowoomba, Kingaroy, Chinchilla, Roma and Charleville at present. If you are unable to obtain accommodation at the facility where you are allocated, then you can apply for SQRH accommodation in these towns. SQRH provides the only accommodation available in Toowoomba.

Submit your accommodation request via InPlace at first and you will then be provided with further information

SQRH can also provide a subsidy for students to travel to and from their placement in an eligible rural location. Applications are considered on a case by case basis by the team at SQRH. For further information please refer to the [NUR: PPHub](#) for more information.

After Placement allocations are released (continued)

Orientation and Roster information

The orientation information on InPlace is divided into sections. It includes any extra requirements that you need to complete for a particular placement location, information for the first day of placement, medication review information, accommodation information for different sites and roster information.

The information for your first day of placement and your roster (if provided) is updated on InPlace **two weeks** prior to your placement commencing. This is to avoid creating confusion for students allocated to different block dates. The dates that the information is for is always included and if a roster is attached, it will be for the students who are attending placement on those dates. The dates will also be on the roster.

Some facilities do not provide a roster and you will be advised on your first day of placement when you will be working. This is a decision made by the facility and therefore it is not something USQ can provide for you.

You are encouraged to check the other information for the facility you are attending well ahead of your placement though as many facilities have extra requirements that you need to complete before attending placement and some may take more time to complete (for example you may be required to obtain a First Aid certificate or complete further iLearn modules). Again this is facility specific and you must complete these requirements or you will not be able to attend placement.

Any extra documents required are to be uploaded to InPlace under the 'Facility Specific Requirements' section.

GUC students please contact your Clinical Coach for orientation information and any other placement issues



Preparing for and attending placement

Clinical equipment and uniform

Uniforms and equipment **must** be purchased prior to undertaking a clinical course.

Clinical Equipment

Students should purchase a stethoscope with bell and diaphragm. These are available from the USQ Bookshop, OMNIA at both Toowoomba and Ipswich campuses and any medical equipment supplier. If you are an external student, you can purchase your equipment online from [OMNIA](#).

Clinical Uniform

The USQ clinical shirt and optional jacket, and belt bag are available from:

- ✦ **Toowoomba and Ipswich campus students** - USQ Books Shops OMNIA
- ✦ **Geraldton and all External students** order online from [OMNIA](#)

Remaining items can be purchased from any retail store

The **full clinical uniform** for nursing students which complies with current Workplace Health and Safety regulations is as follows:

- ✦ **Pants:** Comfortable fitting dark navy blue or black slacks, cargo pants or culottes (No hipster or jeans)
 - GUC students: must wear navy blue nursing scrub pants only
- ✦ **Shirt:** USQ clinical shirts are peacock green for nursing. Clinical shirts are available from the USQ Bookshops.
- ✦ **Shoes:** Black or navy blue lace up, strap or slip-on fully enclosed supportive shoes with a non-slip sole for both genders (**NO** joggers or sandshoes)
- ✦ Hijabs or headscarves must be Navy Blue or Black in colour
- ✦ Black or white sport socks or walk socks
- ✦ Optional – USQ jacket for winter

Lab coats & belt bags, clinical packs and watches can also be purchased from the USQ Bookshops

Clinical deportment

Nursing is a highly respected profession and it is expected that you will present yourself in a professional manner (this is also measured on the ANSAT tools for each clinical course). The only jewellery permitted is a wedding band. A fob watch pinned to your uniform is preferred and in some agencies required, due to possible injury to patients from wrist watches. You must wear your student identification so that it is visible on your uniform. You must ensure that your name and photo are clearly visible and that there is nothing else on the card.

You are not permitted to wear clothing, including underclothing past your elbows while working directly with patients. You are not permitted to wear jumpers or cardigans while working directly with patients. In cooler months, please ensure you wear a black or navy jumper or jacket to and from the facility.

The rules of basic hygiene should be maintained at all times. Long and/or painted fingernails or acrylic nails are not permitted and may cause patient injury. It is essential that you maintain a high standard of personal grooming in order to demonstrate to patients, families and other health professionals that you take personal pride in your appearance.

Students can obtain a Placement identification card from iConnect.

Preparing for and attending clinical placements (continued)

Clinical supervision models



USQ use two models for supervising clinical courses:

- ✦ Facilitation Model
- ✦ Preceptor Model

The model used depends on the:

- ✦ Clinical course
- ✦ Availability of supervisors
- ✦ Clinical facility's requirements

The methods of clinical supervision available at each facility is noted on the InPlace website. Some facilities use more than one model.

Please note the term 'Placement Supervisor' has been used throughout this handbook to cover all terms.

Facilitation model

This model is suited to the nursing students studying NUR1299 Foundations of Nursing Practice, although it may also be used at times in other clinical agencies.

The model uses a Registered Nurses to supervise a group of usually 6-8 students. The Facilitator will organise, supervise and evaluate clinical placement.

The Clinical Course staff or team member will either make a phone call or visit the clinical agency where you are placed. These visits allow discussion and feedback with you and or/your facilitator, allow questions about your assessment items, and assist you to link theory to clinical practice.

Preceptor model

In this model students will be assigned an experienced Registered Nurse, who will be your Preceptor during your placement. Most of the time you will be working closely with your Preceptor, and be on the same shifts. This does mean that you will be rostered with your Preceptor and will be expected to work any of the three shifts, including weekends (if rostered).

Preceptors are aware of the required assessments for your clinical course. On some placements you may have more than one preceptor. If you have more than one preceptor, your final Clinical Evaluation will be conducted using comments from all of your Preceptors, but will usually be compiled by your Principal Preceptor or nominated Registered Nurse.

Preparing for and attending clinical placements (continued)

Attending clinical placements

It is expected that you will attend **100%** of your clinical placement at the time and shift allocated by the clinical facility. This is a requirement of the course specifications for a clinical course. If you do not comply with the roster and roster guidelines set for you by the facility, you may be asked to leave your placement. This could result in an unsatisfactory grade. **Your clinical placement takes priority over other work commitments.** Please give your employer plenty of notice, so work does not impact on your ability to attend your clinical shifts. You will receive orientation information on InPlace two weeks prior to your placement commencing.

Requesting a rostered shift change

With extenuating circumstances, if you need to request a shift change from your rostered shift while on placement, you can approach your clinical supervisor/Nurse Unit Manager (NUM) to request the change. GUC students are unable to request changes from the facility and must contact the Clinical Coach to discuss any concerns.

Facility requests that you change a shift

In some instances, the facility may request you change a shift or your roster. The reasons may be due to Work Place Health and Safety and/staff skill mix requirements. If a staff member requests you to change a shift, you are **obligated to comply** with the request.

Nursing involves shift work - your clinical placements will also include shift work including morning, afternoon and night shifts. You may also be required to do placement shifts on public holidays.

Getting the most out of your clinical

You are responsible for making the most out of the learning opportunities while undertaking your clinical placement. You should:

- ✧ Introduce yourself to the staff within the area you will be working;
- ✧ Come prepared with learning objectives;
- ✧ Be engaged in all clinical activities;
- ✧ Be punctual and dressed appropriately;
- ✧ Take time with your placement supervisor to clearly communicate your placement goals, personal strengths and expectations;
- ✧ Seek feedback for each shift;
- ✧ Achieve a satisfactory grade on the assessment items;
- ✧ Attend clinical placement for the full number of hours allocated to each clinical course
- ✧ Bring your clinical guide/workbook/portfolio documents to placement each day
- ✧ Submit all assessment items electronically through the course Study Desk by the due date.

Preparing for and attending clinical placements (continued)

Absence while on clinical placement

Absences are only accepted due to illness, or extenuating personal circumstances. Make up hours are very difficult to secure, especially toward the end of your program, so please commit 100% to your placement hours.

- ✦ If you are absent during a clinical placement you must inform the facility and relevant staff members AND your course examiner/clinical coach AND the USQ Placements Office immediately.
- ✦ If a student is absent from placement for two days or more, a medical certificate or statutory declaration (whichever is appropriate) must be provided to the Placements Office, **within 10 working days of the absence.**
- ✦ Except in extenuating circumstances (and at the discretion of the course examiner), failure to meet the above conditions will result in the award of a **Fail-Not Participate grade.**

All days/hours missed will need to be made up. We strongly recommend that you make up one or two missed days with extra shifts while on your placement (these can usually be arranged with the NUM).

You may be out on placement during semester breaks and/or may be out on placement during the exam period. If you have an exam timetabled during a clinical placement, you can make arrangements with the NUM to have that day off, however, this day must be made up. You are not permitted to take days off to study or to complete assignment work.

Makeup

Where a student's clinical placement is incomplete because the student has not completed the hours required, make up hours will always be necessary.

Makeup can be difficult to manage for a number of reasons and to assist with this we have different processes to deal with it depending on:

1. Whether you are due to graduate at the end of the upcoming semester and completing your final placements
2. How many hours you have missed
3. Whether you are placed at a facility that allows makeup during the placement

All GUC students please contact your Clinical Coach to organise makeup time

Therefore:

- ✦ If you are due to graduate at the end of the semester of placement, and you have not been able to makeup missed hours in previous placements, please notify the PEPT prior to the start of the semester so that makeup can be organised for you.
- ✦ If you have missed up to 16 hours and are not due to graduate at the end of the semester, please try to make up the hours on your next couple of placements. If you are not successful, then please notify the PEPT at the end of that semester prior to the next semester commencing, so that makeup can be discussed and organised for you if necessary. Refer to the first point as you near the end of your degree.
- ✦ If you have more than 16 hours to makeup, please contact the PEPT to see how this can be best managed

Clinical placements are a limited and expensive resource. Students are expected to make every effort to attend their placement on the days and in the timeframes offered.

Preparing for and attending clinical placements (continued)

Hours/Days missed on clinical placement

✧ Missed hours (up to 16 hours)

If you have missed up to 16 hours or 2 shifts (whichever is greater) you are expected to arrange makeup while on your current placement if the facility can allow this. This may not be possible for NUR1299 or other facilitated placements.

Students in this category will be eligible to pass the course provided they have completed the final ANSAT evaluation successfully.

✧ Missed hours (over 16 hours and under 40 hours)

If you have missed up to 40 hours or 3 - 5 shifts you must make this time up during your next clinical placement or at the earliest time possible if the make-up is required in the final semester of your enrolment.

Students in this category who have provided acceptable documents supporting their missed hours, will be placed on an IDM until they complete their assessment and the hours required.

✧ Missed hours (over 40 hours)

If you miss more than 40 hours in specialty areas, with supporting documentation to justify this, (e.g. NUR1299, NUR3599) you will be required to make-up hours in that specialty area. The grade that is entered will be decided by the course examiner but the student MUST have completed a successful Interim report, achieved some of the required competencies and have an accurate timesheet.

- ✧ It is **your responsibility** to ensure you keep a record of any hours/days that have been missed and need to be made up. You must email your Examiner as well as the PEPT to advise them of the missed shifts. There must be a **genuine reason** ([Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances policy](#)) for a shift change or shifts to be missed.
- ✧ If the facility is unable to provide the makeup time needed, contact the PEPT, your Course Examiner or Clinical Coach or the Clinical Education Lead for advice about organising makeup hours
- ✧ Some facilities do not want students to ask about makeup opportunities – this will be noted in your orientation information. In this situation please ask the PEPT to request makeup at this facility while you are on placement

Public holidays

If there is a Public Holiday on one of your clinical days and the area/facility you are doing placement in is open and functioning, students will be expected to work the shift. If the area/facility is closed for the public holiday those missed hours must be made up.

Students must keep a timesheet and record clinical hours completed or missed for every clinical placement. You may be asked to provide these to the PEPT in order to assist with calculating and confirming any makeup requirements.

Preparing for and attending clinical placements (continued)

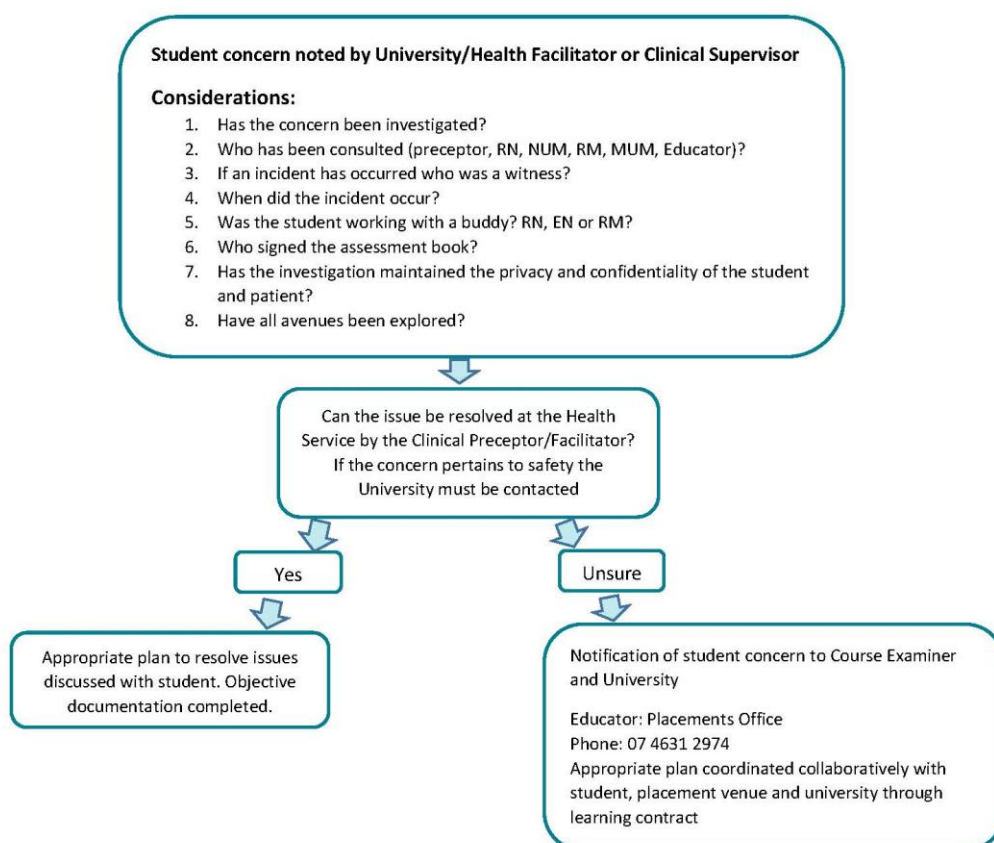
Identification of student related concerns

The following guidelines are used when areas of student responsibility are not fulfilled. This can be where a performance concern has been identified or where a student is unfit or unprofessional. Initial communication with the student and university representative is very important. This flowchart is to assist in addressing concerns and providing support and guidance to the student and the facility.

These charts acts as a guide for student management issues however each concern is managed independently based on what is required. For concerns that are serious a more complex decision guide is used. This needs to be conducted with the University and Health Facility collaboratively.

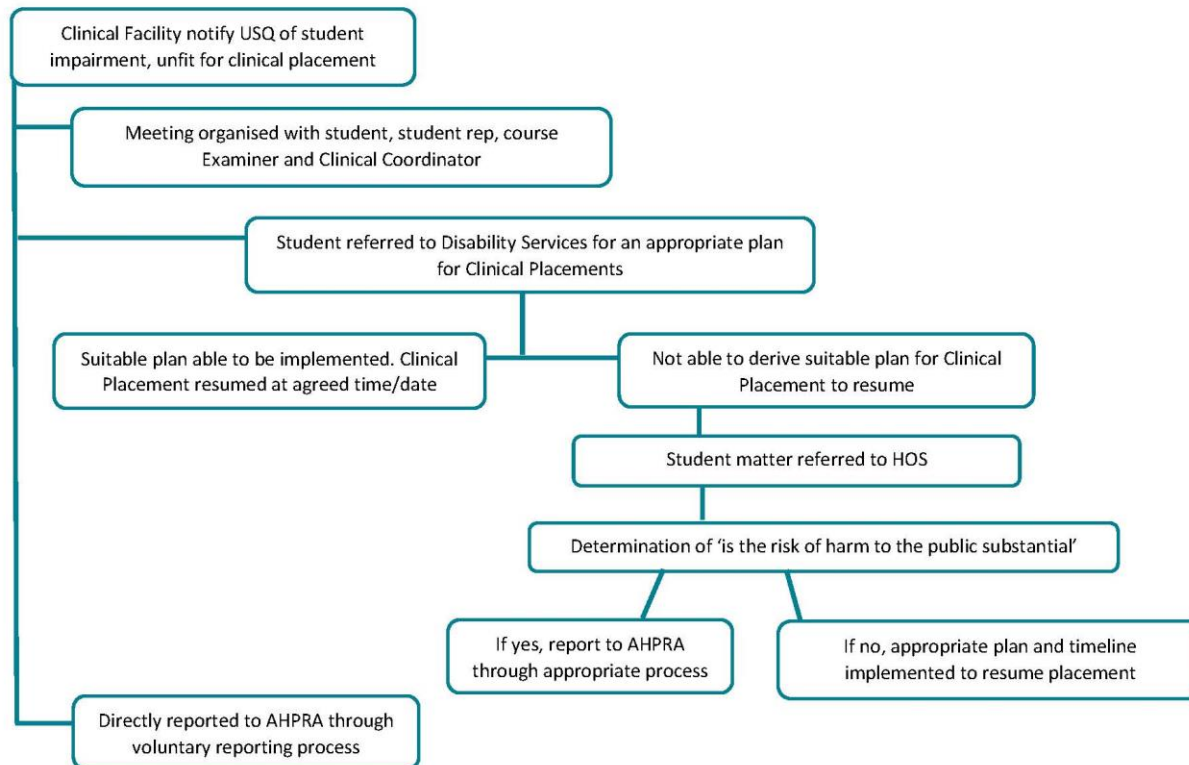
- ✧ Decision Guide – Performance Concern
- ✧ Decision Guide – Unfit for Clinical Placements

Decision Guide – Performance Concern



Preparing for and attending clinical placements (continued)

Decision Guide – Unfit for Clinical Placements



Preparing for and attending clinical placements (continued)

Clinical course specifications

The course specification for each clinical course gives the information you must have about course evaluation. Download your course specification and become familiar with what you must do if you plan to obtain a passing grade in the course. Information about your Clinical and Clinical Courses can be found on the Study Desk Sites.

Clinical course evaluation and assessment tools

All of your clinical assessment documents and assessment requirements are located in your clinical course workbooks and on your clinical course study desk sites. Your workbooks must be downloaded and printed to take with you on your placements. You must ensure the timesheet is with you at all time and signed by your supervisor, facilitator or preceptor at the end of EVERY shift. Each assessment item completed by your facilitator or preceptor is with an initial and signature in the required areas for competency assessment/achievement (ticks are not permitted).

The clinical course evaluation tool incorporates the [Australian Nursing Standards Assessment Tool \(ANSAT\)](#) elements and competencies. This tool has been developed based on 2016 Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) standards. ANSAT has been developed to assess competency of registered nurse practice. It is a user friendly tool that can be used to assess the performance of nursing students or graduates in practice settings. The tool is based on the standards defined by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA). The scores for the items in the tool are determined by observed behaviours. It has been developed to assist consistency for nurses who are required to assess student and/or graduate performance in the practice setting

Acknowledgement: Support for the original work was provided by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd, as an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Student evaluation of clinical teaching effectiveness

You have the opportunity to evaluate the teaching effectiveness of your placement supervisor while on clinical placement. The link to the evaluation form is located on the clinical course study desk. The completed evaluation form can be submitted with your clinical evaluation tools. The Course Examiner will read the evaluations and comments made by students at the end of the clinical placement. If you have any concerns about the ability of the staff at a facility to provide an effective and supportive experience, follow up communication with the Placement Supervisor may be arranged by the Clinical Education Lead.

Please ensure that all times the comments that you make are constructive as the outcome of this exercise is to promote the effectiveness of clinical teaching.

It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all of your placement assessments and timesheets throughout your course. If a problem arises, you may need this information to prove you have completed a placement. You may also need them when applying for a graduate position once you complete your Bachelor of Nursing.

The Placement Office do not have copies of these documents should you lose your copy.

Insurance, Emergency situations and Risk Management

Insurance while on placement

While you are on a compulsory placement for your course, you will be covered by USQ insurance for some aspects of your placement. Please go to the [PPHub](#) for more information on what is covered and what is not covered, how you qualify for this and how to make a claim.

Emergencies that arise while on placement

While you are on a compulsory placement for your course, there are guidelines which apply to you should an emergency requiring medical care arise. Please review these guidelines on your [PPHub](#) before you go on your placements as they advise what sort of care would be covered by USQ and what would be the responsibility of the student.

Injury while on placement

If a student is injured or becomes unwell on placement and the Student/CF/Preceptor/NUM assess that an Emergency Department consultation is necessary.

If the student is on placement and on duty in a Private Facility with an Emergency Department (ED), where payment is required:

- ✦ The student is offered the choice to either be transported to the ED or to be transported outside of the hospital to a public facility ED via QAS
- ✦ Contact Professional Experience Placements Office immediately on 1300 99 82 36
- ✦ If the student chooses to stay in the private hospital ED, and the injury is a WorkCover claim, the student should be informed the University will **not** be responsible for any costs incurred for consults and treatment
- ✦ If the student chooses to stay in the private hospital ED due to an acute illness, the student should be informed the University will pay for the initial consult, but will not be responsible for any costs incurred for investigations, further consults and treatment

If the student is on placement and on duty in a Public Facility with an ED:

- ✦ The student is offered the choice to either be transported to the ED or to be transported outside of the hospital to a private facility ED via QAS. In this instance of leaving the hospital, the University will **not** be responsible for any costs incurred for consults and treatment
- ✦ The student should be encouraged to remain in the public hospital ED where there are no costs involved for consults, investigations and treatments
- ✦ Contact Professional Experience Placements Office immediately on 1300 99 82 36
- ✦ If the student chooses to travel to a private hospital ED, and the injury is a WorkCover claim, the student should be informed the University will **not** be responsible for any costs incurred for consults and treatment
- ✦ If the student chooses to travel to a private hospital ED due to an acute illness, the student should be informed the University will pay for the initial consult, but will **not** be responsible for any costs incurred for investigations, further consults and treatment

Risk Management

As you take part in the clinical placement program, it is essential that you are aware of the hazards that could occur during placement. You have an obligation to protect yourself and minimise any potential incident from an identified hazard. Below are some common hazards that you might encounter and some strategies to minimise the associated risk. If at any time on a placement you feel unsafe or uncomfortable with a possible or actual risk you must notify the PEPT.

In the event that an adverse incident occurs while you are on placement, please comply with the Facilities Work Health & Safety (WH&S) policies. You must also complete a USQ incident form (found on your Clinical Course Study Desk) and send it to your Course Examiner

For safety concerns or emergencies that arise after hours or In the event of a critical incident, if you are distressed, or have been involved in any emergency, please phone: 1300 998 236

Student travel to and from placements

If you are working late or night shifts while on clinical, please ensure you are familiar with the security officers and relevant contact numbers for that facility. A security officer may be available to escort you to your car or public transport before and after work.

There is a risk of motor vehicle accidents when travelling to and from placement. Travelling distances to rural or remote placement can be tiring. It is recommended that you take **regular breaks and stops in this journey**. Refer to study desk if there are other students travelling to the same destination, you may be able to share the journey with them. Please ensure your vehicle is safe for travelling long distances and you keep the fuel tank reasonably well filled. It is recommended that you have a road side assistance policy in the event of a break down. Be aware of distances between towns. Please ensure your mobile phone is sufficiently charged at all times. Always keep someone informed of your whereabouts if you are in or travelling to a remote location.

If you are driving to a placement it is important that you practice safe driving

<https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/licensing/getting/education/defensive/index.html>

If you are on prescribed medications consult your General Practitioner as to whether it is safe for you to drive. Remember to park your vehicle in areas that the health care facility have deemed suitable for staff to park. If you are leaving a health care facility after hours remember to abide by the security conditions of the facility to **minimise any risk to yourself**.

Reasonable work hours

A roster will be created for you to complete on your clinical placement. Rosters may include **shifts that are up to 12 hours**. As a student you cannot work more than 12 hours in one shift. It is recommended that you **will not do more** than 5 shifts one after another, that are 8 to 12 hours long.

You are required to work the shift hours allocated by the health care facility and **in accordance with the policy and employment practice of the facility**. For example a student cannot choose to work a 9 hour shift when the ward requirements are an 8 hour shift. Students can work all shifts across a 24 hour period. This includes working night shift as long as the student is supervised and working with their allocated preceptor or an equally experienced registered nurse.

Meal break entitlements may depend on the facility where you work, however generally you are entitled to a 10 minute break for each 4 hours of a shift e.g. 20 minutes in an 8 hour shift/30 minutes in a 12 hour shift. These can be joined together and taken as a 20 or 30 minute break if desired. You are also entitled to a 30 minute 'unpaid' break in an 8 hour shift and 2 x 30 minute breaks in a 12 hour shift (1 x 30 minute breaks is 'unpaid'). This means your rostered hours for an 8 hour shift will be 8.5 hours and 12.5 hours for a 12 hour shift to accommodate the 'unpaid' breaks. **Remember** your hours of work need to meet the placements required number of hours.

Insurance, Emergency situations and Risk Management (continued)

Paid work hours and clinical placements

The university understands the need for students to work to support themselves financially. You must consider **fatigue policies** when completing a placement and also having paid work.

To make sure you comply with the fatigue policies in many facilities you must balance your paid work and clinical placement hours. You **CANNOT** work full time and attend placement as this **conflicts with health facilities fatigue policies and places the public at risk**.

It is also vital for your safety that you do not complete an out of university paid shift and then a clinical shift **directly after**. This is outside Queensland Health and Private Health Facilities workplace health and safety rules. For example students should not finish a night shift as an AIN in their job and then attend a morning shift as a student in a hospital ward. If you do not understand this please contact the PEPT for help.

**Your clinical placement takes priority over other work commitments.
Please give your employer plenty of notice, so work does not impact
on your ability to attend your clinical shifts.**

Extenuating Circumstances or Disaster Management processes

Students are allocated placements across a variety of settings within health care. If a serious situation arises that results in a facility activating their disaster management plan, it is vital that **students follow the lead of the clinical team** within the facility. These events might include utilities failure, flood, fire, ward closure, codes for violent behaviours or any other significant event.

If at any time while on clinical placement you feel unsafe or are not comfortable with a potential or actual risk you must **notify the Placements office**. If this event occurs after hours then use the after-hours number.

Infectious disease risk

Cross infection, the transfer of harmful bacteria from one person, object, or place to another, or from one part of the body to another (such as touching a staph-infected hand to the eye) is one of the **risks of being a health care provider**.

- ✦ Not complying with immunisation requirements increases your risk of being infected with a disease through exposure to blood and body substances in the clinical setting.
- ✦ There is risk of being infected with a disease by being exposed to blood, body substances or infected materials. The risk is increased if you have an open wound, such as a cut on the finger.
- ✦ There is a risk of being infected with an acute infectious disease, such as influenza, from being with infected individuals.
- ✦ Handling of any object capable of causing a penetrating injury (for example needles) while on placement can possibly cause injury and infection.

These **risks can be reduced** by maintaining your health and immunity, maintaining your personal hygiene, undergoing immunisation and health tests, using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and complying with local workplace infection control procedures (which include procedures for sharps injuries and blood exposure).

In the event that a splash or needle stick injury occurs, **you must immediately tell** the health care facility contact person, and the Placements Office. An incident form **MUST** be completed at the health care facility and the USQ incident form (found on the [NUR:PPHub](#)) must be completed and sent to your course examiner. In the event of an adverse incident occurring while you are on placement, please comply with the Facilities WH&S policies.

Psychological risk

If you believe that you are being **bullied or harassed** while on placement you should try to raise the issue with the person if possible, or speak to your placement supervisor and/or course examiner. If you feel uncomfortable with addressing the situation with the person involved **you MUST contact** the PEPT to discuss the matter further and ask for help or intervention. Student services can provide you with support and guidance while a management plan is decided.

Manual handling risk

Good manual handling can protect you from strains, sprains and other injuries. If you have an injury or significant weakness in one or more of your limbs or back, or you are pregnant, you are at a greater risk of injury. Ensure you **practice safe manual handling practices**. Think before you lift! What other option are there apart from manual lifting.

✧ A **No Lift Policy** is enforced in almost all QHealth, Private and other Facilities.

In the event that you sustain an injury before or during your clinical placement time **you MUST contact** the Placements office and report this.

Reporting an incident

If you have an injury or an incident while you are on placement, **you must report it to your placement supervisor and the health care facility contact immediately**. You will be required to complete an incident report for the facility. This must be done as soon as possible after the incident. Once this is completed, please make sure you keep a copy of this report.

GUC students must inform the Nursing Academic Coordinator and the GUC Clinical Coach.

USQ Student Services can provide you with support if you need this at any time during your course. This is a confidential service available to all students.

Professional Expectations

Fitness for clinical placement

If you have an impairment or a criminal charge listed against you on your National Police Check, you may not be considered 'Fit for clinical placement'

An 'impairment' is defined under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as a

- ✦ physical or mental impairment,
- ✦ disability,
- ✦ condition or disorder (including substance abuse or dependence),

that detrimentally affects or is likely to detrimentally affect capacity to safely practice the profession or a student's capacity to undertake clinical training. National Boards may place conditions on your registration to ensure that you are able to practice safely if you fall in this category.

If you do have an impairment you should check with AHPRA that they will register you on completion of your course.

When you complete your application for admission to the program, you will be asked to inform USQ if you have:

- ✦ An impairment that is likely to affect your capacity to practice the profession or do clinical placement
- ✦ Any criminal history that you may have in Australia and/or overseas

Declaring impairments or criminal history does not always mean that you cannot be admitted to the program

The university will decide whether the impairment or criminal history is relevant to your ability to do placement. Sometimes, depending on the situation, it is necessary for the PEPT to share this information with a health facility for them to confirm whether or not they are able to provide a placement.

If you have a health/disability issue that could impair your ability to do a placement

- ✦ ask your doctors opinion and ask for a medical clearance certificate *which states that you are able to fully take part in all the required activities and have the skills and communication ability to meet the objectives of the course*
- ✦ give your certificate to the PEPT or discuss this with your Examiner
- ✦ the Program Coordinator will be asked to review your information and provide feedback
- ✦ you will then be informed of the outcome

Any information you provide will be treated with discretion and in line with the privacy policy of the University.

Professional expectations (continued)

Student conduct, behaviour and responsibilities on placement

These guidelines aim to provide guidance for you about correct conduct and behaviour, what is expected from you and your responsibilities while on placement. Preceptors and Clinical Facilitators are provided with a handbook specifically related to their roles and responsibilities in providing support and clinical supervision to students.

Students will comply with the [USQ Student Code of Conduct Policy](#)

- If there is a breach of this policy, students may be asked to leave a facility and may obtain a fail grade for the clinical course

This includes:

- ✦ *Attend* and take part in placements arranged by the university.
- ✦ *Undertake* all activities associated with the successful completion of your degree efficiently, effectively and to the best of your abilities.
- ✦ *Actively join* in the learning process and be responsible for your learning.
- ✦ *Adhere* to all legislative conditions, work health and safety conditions, security conditions, confidentiality & privacy conditions and any other rules, bylaws, policies and procedures relating to the Placement that are a requirement of a facility, organisation, government or the university.
- ✦ *Maintain* current contact details with USQ (i.e. email and mobile phone number) and be able to be contacted within 48 hours both immediately prior to and throughout placements.
- ✦ *Seek assistance* if not confident with a procedure/treatment, or if you lack understanding in an area.
- ✦ *Provide* patient/client centred-care under professional supervision only
- ✦ *Practice* in a manner that is safe and respectful and consistent with your level of competency.
- ✦ *Be responsible* for any accommodation and travel costs
- ✦ *Take responsibility* for your personal belongings.

Be Professional

- ✦ *Maintain* standards of professional practice.
- ✦ *Abide by* relevant Codes of Professional Conduct.
- ✦ *Be great ambassadors* for the university and uphold standards of professional behaviour and presentation.
- ✦ *Be respectful and polite* in communications with all people.
- ✦ *Ensure* you have a zero blood alcohol level and haven't consumed drugs which may adversely affect your performance on placement.
- ✦ *Be punctual*
- ✦ *Maintain* confidentiality of information - protect the privacy of patients/clients and colleagues.
- ✦ *Wear a legible name badge* at all times on clinical placements.
- ✦ *Comply* with reasonable and lawful directions of your Placement Supervisor.
- ✦ *Act* honestly, ethically and in good faith.
- ✦ *Respect* the rights, beliefs and values of others.
- ✦ *Discuss issues* as they arise with the placement supervisor, NUM or course examiner and act to resolve problems quickly and cooperatively.

Professional expectations (continued)

Complete Assessments

- ✦ *Discuss* learning/clinical objectives and expected learning outcomes with your placement supervisor.
- ✦ *Arrange* a plan for signing clinical assessment documentation early in the placement
- ✦ *Contact* the NUM or the course examiner if there are any difficulties with meeting your course objectives
- ✦ *Contact* the NUM or the course examiner if the placement supervisor is not willing to initial, sign or make comments on clinical assessments
- ✦ *Ensure* that all assessment paperwork is completed and correctly submitted on time

Students will not:

Act outside USQ guidelines

- ✦ *Swap* their placement with other students **without notifying PEPT**
- ✦ *Attend* a placement without the knowledge and consent of the course examiner and PEPT, if they have been advised by the University that the placement has been cancelled
- ✦ *Make public comment* on behalf of a School or the University without the written authorisation of the Executive Dean (Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences). This does not include circumstances in which the student is required to provide evidence in a court of law or is otherwise legally obliged or authorised by law.
- ✦ *Remove or misuse* any resources from either the University or placement facility.

Be Unprofessional

- ✦ *Act* outside the professional codes of conduct and scope of practice as defined by AHPRA
- ✦ *Undertake* patient/client care without being supervised by a registered health care professional.
- ✦ *Participate* in any activities that misrepresent their status or level of skill or knowledge.
- ✦ *Work outside* their scope of practice.
- ✦ *Take part* in behaviours that may cause injury to others.
- ✦ *Be involved* in any conduct or behaviour that could be reasonably interpreted as harassment, discriminatory, offensive or embarrassing to others.
- ✦ *Take part* in any relationship in which there is any potential for taking advantage of the trust relationship inherent in the health or human service professional. Consent by the patient/client or the fact that they started the conduct or behaviour is not a defence.
- ✦ *Accept* gifts or any form of benefit from a patient/client that could be viewed as potentially influencing decisions about care or treatment or be viewed as influencing the impartiality of health care delivery.
- ✦ *Breach* the NMBA Social Media policy

Professional expectations (continued)

The Facilitator and/or Preceptor, RN or NUM supervisor (Placement Supervisor) will:

Demonstrate Professional behaviour

- ✦ *Act as a role model introducing students to acceptable professional behaviour.*
- ✦ *Maintain standards of professional practice.*
- ✦ *Abide by relevant Codes of Professional Conduct.*
- ✦ *Ensure students are made aware of legislative, health and safety, security, workplace confidentiality and privacy conditions and any other workplace policies and procedures related to their placements.*

Provide Clinical Support

- ✦ *Arrange for and obtain patient/client's consent for students to provide health or human services to them and to have access to their records. Consent may be freely withheld.*
- ✦ *Ensure that students who have access to patient/clients are competent to perform their allotted tasks and that they conduct themselves in a safe and professional manner.*
- ✦ *Contact the NUM or the course examiner if there are clinical or professional issues which they are concerned about*
- ✦ *Contact the NUM or the course examiner if the student is not willing or committed to the work required*
- ✦ *Ensure that all assessment documentation is completed and correctly signed on time*
- ✦ *Adopt the role of helper and facilitator of learning and provide a variety of learning experiences in keeping with the placements needs.*
- ✦ *Provide a positive learning environment. This includes reinforcement of orientation to various settings, including individual patient/clients, briefing and debriefing the students.*

Provide Learning Support

- ✦ *Understand the University's requirements of placements as laid out in documents and information*
- ✦ *Actively join in the learning process with the student and take responsibility for supporting learning*
- ✦ *Discuss clinical objectives and expected learning outcomes with the student early in the placement*
- ✦ *Arrange a plan with the student for signing of clinical assessment documents*
- ✦ *Arrange regular and sufficient meetings with the student to discuss goals, progress and/or difficulties.*
- ✦ *Regularly clarify what is expected with the student and make adequate observations of their work. Provide ongoing verbal and written feedback, to ensure continuous learning progress throughout the placement.*
- ✦ *Provide constructive feedback to the student on all aspects of their performance*
- ✦ *Report on student progress/undertake assessment using documentation provided and notify NUM and course examiner immediately if the student is having difficulties meeting the objectives.*
- ✦ *Provide feedback to the University about placements that could improve the learning program in the long term.*

Professional expectations (continued)

The Course Examiner/GUC Clinical Coach and/or Professional Experience Placements Team will:

Organise and Plan Placements

- ✦ Be in regular contact with placements facilities and visit placement sites as needed.
- ✦ Be accessible by telephone and email for communication on placements issues and respond as soon as possible (normally within 24 hours).
- ✦ Coordinate the students' pre-placement requirements including student briefing, student orientation checklists, criminal checks, immunisation and CPR, as required by the facilities.
- ✦ Undertake reasonable effort to find placements for students with a blood-borne virus. Where alternative placements cannot be found and the placement type is required to complete the degree program the university will use reasonable endeavours to provide guidance to students.
- ✦ Evaluate the Clinical Placement program and viability of clinical placements at particular facilities to ensure safety of students.

Manage the academic aspects of the program

- ✦ If there is any doubt, decisions to pass or fail a student are the final responsibility of the course examiner.

Communicate

- ✦ Provide both the student and the placement supervisor with information about the placement and placement requirements, including assessment criteria, policies, obligations (such as confidentiality) and any other relevant documentation.
- ✦ Be responsible for all disciplinary matters and will mediate between facilitators and/or preceptors and students on placement, practice or professional issues.
- ✦ Advise students of the need to disclose any relevant medical or other health related conditions that may affect the health, safety or comfort of the student or any other person.
- ✦ Undertake to negotiate reasonable adjustments to cater for students with special needs within what is deemed reasonable adjustment within the boundaries of AHPRA registration guidelines.

Related university policies

[Student Code of Conduct Policy](#)

[Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Resolution for Students Policy and Procedure](#)

[Student Complaint and Appeal Policy](#)

[Work Health and Safety](#)

[Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances Policy](#)

STUDENT DECLARATION 2021

Every student must complete and submit the following declaration to confirm they have read and understood the entire contents of this handbook. Without completion of this handbook students' risk not being permitted to attend Clinical Placements. This Guide has been produced to aid students in their understanding of clinical or expectations and requirements

- I declare I have read and understood the Professional Practice Experience Handbook for Nursing Students.
- I understand that I must abide by the standards described within the Professional Practice Experience Handbook for Nursing Students. I understand that I need to contact the Professional Placements Office if I am unable to meet the obligations for workplace experience at any stage of my course progression.
- I understand and accept my student responsibilities as outlined in the Professional Practice Experience Handbook for Nursing Students
- I understand and consent to the University providing relevant personal/health (including mandatory document) information about me to placement agencies as necessary for placement purposes only

Student Name: _____ Student Number: _____

Student Signature _____ Date: ____/____/____

I understand that I must notify the Professional Placements Office of any written notices issued by the Commissioner for Young People and Child Guardian or from the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) as soon as I am notified of such a notice.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Witness Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

This form is part of the pre placements mandatory requirements for all students that attend clinical placements within health care facilities from the University of Southern Queensland. It is required to be submitted to the Professional Placements Office.