

BACHELOR OF NURSING

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

ACRONYMS

ANMC	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council
BN	Bachelor of Nursing
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
FHS	Faculty of Health Science
NBT	Nursing Board of Tasmania
RN	Registered Nurse
SNM	School of Nursing and Midwifery
UTAS	University of Tasmania

DEFINITIONS

“**bachelor of nursing coordinator**” is the SNM academic member of staff who has responsibility for the operation of all teaching and learning components of the BN program.

“**clinical placement officer**” is the SNM administrative member of staff who has responsibility for all administrative processes relating to professional experience placements.

“**clinical teacher**” is employed by the SNM to teach, facilitate and generally oversee students’ professional experience placement experience.

“**direct supervision**” means that the activity undertaken by the student is totally monitored by a Registered Nurse.

“**director of clinical education**” is the SNM academic member of staff who is responsible for the development and implementation of clinical education teaching and learning policy.

“**health care agency**” is any hospital, clinic or other community health care provider that makes available professional experience places for students of nursing.

“**partners in health**” is an unincorporated collaborative between the Department of Health and Human Services and the University of Tasmania formed in 1998 through the signing of a Statement of Mutual Intent (revised 20 August 2003).

“**preceptor**” is a Registered Nurse employed by the health care agency who is educationally prepared to undertake supervision of students of nursing during professional experience placement.

“**professional experience placement**” is an external clinical placement opportunity provided to students at designated times throughout the BN program.

“**registered nurse**” is a health care worker who has professional registration with the Nursing Board of Tasmania.

“**stakeholder**” is the term for persons affected by or participating in professional experience placements.

“**student**” is a person who is currently enrolled in the undergraduate Bachelor of Nursing course at the University of Tasmania.

“**unit coordinator**” is the SNM academic member of staff who has responsibility for the teaching and learning components of individual subject units of the BN program.

INTRODUCTION

The School of Nursing and Midwifery's (SNM) Professional Experience Placement Policy and Procedures has been developed in accordance with University of Tasmania's (UTAS) 'Practicum Placement of Students Policy', the Partners in Health 'Affiliation Deed', the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) framework for nursing in Australia and the Nursing Board of Tasmania's (NBT) 'Standards for the Supervision of Students in the Practice Setting'.

This document provides policy guidelines and procedures relating to professional experience placements for staff of the SNM, undergraduate students of nursing, and health care agency staff.

The SNM Professional Experience Placement Policy and Procedures were approved for implementation by the SNM Teaching and Learning Committee on the 30th June 2006. The SNM Director of Teaching and Learning has responsibility for the implementation, biennial review and the maintenance of content currency of this policy and procedure document, including references and linkages to the most recent version of the policies of external organisations.

Implementation and Dissemination

The SNM Professional Experience Placement Policy and Procedures original document will at all times remain located on the SNM website. To aid implementation and to ensure all stakeholders receive concise information relating to their area of responsibility, the following features have been included within the web function of the document.

Links are provided within the document to:

- Federal and state legislation;
- UTAS policies and procedures;
- Peak community health care profession policies and codes;
- SNM procedures and related forms for students; and
- Checklists containing sections of the policy that explicitly relate to different stakeholders' areas of responsibility.

The SNM undertakes to disseminate relevant policy and procedural information to ALL stakeholders involved in professional experience placements.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR KEY SNM STAFF

Director of Clinical Education	Annette Marlow	03 6324 3455
Bachelor of Nursing Coordinator	Robyn Kelly	03 63 24 3671

TASMANIA

Course Related Enquiries

BN Coordinator	Robyn Kelly	03 6324 3671
Program Coordinator - Hobart	Juliet Sondermeyer	03 6226 4695

SNM ADMINISTRATION

Clinical Placement Officer	Marcelle Lyons	03 6324 3192
SNM Course Administration Officer	Wendy Nas	03 6324 3110

SYDNEY

Course Related Enquiries – St Vincent’s Campus

Program Coordinator	Chris Brook	02 8382 4822
SNM Administration Officer	Tiffany Ponsittinat	02 8382 4820

Course Related Enquiries –Rozelle Campus

Program Coordinator		02 8572 7998
SNM Administration Officer	Rosemary Hill	02 8572 7999

24/7 Professional Experience Practice Emergency Contact

Individual Unit Coordinators of professional experience practice units have a mobile telephone. This telephone is used for the duration of the students’ practicum, and details of the number will be included in relevant professional experience placement documentation, pertaining to individual units.

CLINICAL EDUCATION IN THE BN PROGRAM

The SNM developed the clinical education curriculum in the BN program with reference to and in accordance with the following professional codes and guidelines:

1. National framework for nursing in Australia, which consists of the ANMC:
 - Code of Ethics for Nurses in Australia, 2008.
 - Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses in Australia, 2008.
 - National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse, 2006.
2. Nursing Board of Tasmania:
 - Standards of Medication Management for Nurses and Midwives, 2008
 - Scope of Nursing Practice Decision Making Framework, 2006.
 - Standards for the Supervision of Students in Practice Setting, 2006.
3. Partners in Health:
 - Faculty Practice Agreement, 2004.
 - Affiliation Deed, 2004.
 - Guidelines for Students on Clinical Placement with the DHHS, 2005.

The broad clinical experiential curriculum of the BN aims to graduate students as safe beginning level registered nurses who have developed and are able to consistently apply a substantive framework of knowledge and skills pertinent to nursing people in a variety of health care locations. Clinical education forms an integral part of the BN program at the SNM with all students undertaking clinical practice in laboratory settings and professional experience placements in a variety of health care agencies throughout Tasmania or interstate.

To satisfy the requirements of the Nursing Board of Tasmania accreditation processes and University course award requirements, students are required to complete professional experience placements. These placements are allocated by the SNM which has a responsibility to ensure that students are adequately prepared and assessed prior to undertaking professional experience placements.

Student professional experience placement occurs in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Students must have read and signed the 'Letter of Offer' prior to the commencement of Year 1, - this letter outlines important information relating to professional experience options
2. Students must have successfully completed all pre-requisite academic units and be physically and psychologically able to undertake the key assessment items of each nursing practice unit.

If a student has a physical, sensory or mental health impairment or infectious disease which may adversely affect their capacity to engage in client/patient care in a manner which ensures safety of self or others, the Director of Clinical Education can request a medical clearance letter from the student's medical practitioner.

3. Students must complete a Student Placement Agreement prior to the commencement of each professional experience placement.
4. Professional experience placements are determined by health care agency agreements, the availability of appropriate teaching sites and availability of clinical teachers and preceptors. Health care agencies that participate in the BN are located statewide, and therefore students may need to travel in Year 1 and Year 2 and may need to relocate to a different region to undertake the units CNA315 – Acute Care Nursing Practice, and CNA316 Community and Mental Health Nursing Practice.
5. Students are not permitted to directly approach facilities to organise their own placements. Any students who attempt to organise their own placement will be directed back to the University of Tasmania Clinical Placement Officer.
6. Students are allocated professional placements according to information which will be clearly outlined on the Student Placement Management System (SPMS).
7. Students are informed of their practice placement location via SPMS.
8. If students have any issues or concerns that relate to their placement location they should notify the Director of Clinical Education, in writing, within seven days of receiving their location of placement.
9. Students are generally expected to be available for placement on a seven day/week basis in order to accommodate agency demands, and may be expected to be rostered on for a variety of shifts (mornings, evenings or nights, as per roster).

Placements in Health Care Agencies

Students are placed within a wide range of health care agencies including community, acute care, rural and remote and aged care settings to undertake professional experience practice. Placements available to students are dependent upon the SNM's negotiations with individual health care agencies. Students will be expected to travel and/or relocate for some of their clinical placement experiences. An overview of the clinical placements is listed below and is subject to NBT accreditation and changes to the curriculum. Details and dates pertaining to professional placement will be clearly documented in specific Unit Outlines. It is important to note that days and dates of practice may be subject to change in accordance with Health Care Agency requirements; the hours of practice however will remain unchanged.

Year 1

Students undertake professional experience in semester 2 in the unit *Introduction to Nursing Practice* (CNA111). The aim of the Year 1 professional practice experience is to:

- introduce students to the culture and activities of the nursing environment; and
- assist the development of students' fundamental nursing skills

Placement type: Health care agencies

Duration: 80 hours

Year 2

Students undertake professional experience in semester 1 and 2 in the units *Foundations of Nursing Practice* and *Contemporary Nursing Practice* (CNA202 and CNA226). The aims of the Year 2 professional experience are to:

- provide students the opportunity to explore health issues associated with episodic and chronic illness while integrating a critical thinking approach;
- assist students to develop a beginning level of understanding of the knowledge and skills necessary to care for people in hospital and community agencies; and
- assist students to develop a substantive framework of knowledge and skills, utilising individual case studies and experiential learning.

Placement type: Health care agencies

Duration: 120 hours in each semester

Year 3

Students undertake professional experience in Semester 1 and Semester 2. The professional experience units are *Community and Mental Health Nursing Practice* (CNA316) and *Acute Care Nursing* (CNA315). These two units will:

- assist students to develop an understanding of community based health issues, mental health issues and an appreciation of the particular needs of people whose lives are affected by mental illness; and
- provide the opportunity for students to care for individuals and families who experience illness or accident and require interventions within an acute care setting.

Placement type: Community, mental health and acute care nursing settings

Duration:	Acute Care	312 hours
	Community Nursing Practice	156 hours
	Mental Health Nursing Practice	156 hours

Please note that some students will be enrolled in a two year BN and they will undertake Community and Mental Health Nursing practice at the end of their first year of study during the Spring Semester, and Acute Care Nursing practice at the end of their second year of study in the Spring Semester.

CODE OF CONDUCT DURING PROFESSIONAL PLACEMENT

When undertaking a professional experience placement, SNM students are expected to abide by University of Tasmania rules under, [University Ordinance 9](#); and to develop the behavioural practice of health care professionals in accordance with the:

1. Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council:
 - [Code of Ethics for Nurses in Australia 2008](#); and
 - [Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses in Australia 2008](#).

The Code of Ethics focuses on the ethics and ideals of the profession, whilst the Code of Professional Conduct identifies the minimum requirements for practice in the profession and focuses on the clarification of professional misconduct and unprofessional conduct. These Codes, together with the ANMC [National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse 2006](#) provide the framework for nursing in Australia.

The following *excerpts* from the ANMC Codes and the UTAS Rules for Misconduct and Discipline provide clear guidelines for student conduct during professional experience placement.

ANMC Code of Ethics for Nurses in Australia

'The ANMC Code of Ethics outlines the nursing profession's intention to accept the rights of individuals and to uphold these rights in practice'. The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to:

- identify the fundamental moral commitments of the profession;
- provide nurses with a basis for professional and self reflection on ethical conduct;
- act as a guide to ethical practice; and
- indicate to the community the moral values which nurses can be expected to hold.

The Code of Ethics contains eight broad value statements, each with a number of Explanatory Statements provided to assist in the interpretation of the value statements. Students of nursing are encouraged to use these statements as a guide in reflecting upon the degree to which their practice demonstrates those values.

Code of Ethics Value Statements

1. Nurses value quality nursing care for all people
2. Nurses value respect and kindness for self and others
3. Nurses value the diversity of people
4. Nurses value access to quality nursing and health care for all people
5. Nurses value informed decision making
6. Nurses value a culture of safety in nursing and health care
7. Nurses value ethical management of information
8. Nurses value a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable environment promoting health and well being.

ANMC Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses in Australia

The Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses in Australia 2008 is a set of national standards of nursing conduct for Australian nurses. Nurses have a responsibility to the individual, society, and the profession to provide safe and competent nursing care which is responsive to individual, group and community needs, and the profession.

Code of Professional Conduct Provisions

There are Explanatory Statements for all provisions of the Code of Professional Conduct which clarify the meaning and scope of operation of each provision listed below.

To act in accordance with the Provisions of the Code of Professional Conduct, a nurse must:

1. Practise in a safe and competent manner
2. Practise in accordance with the standards of the profession and broader health system
3. Practise and conduct themselves in accordance with laws relevant to the profession and practice of nursing in accordance with laws relevant to the nurse's area of practice
4. Respect the dignity, culture, ethnicity, values and beliefs of people receiving care and treatment, and of their colleagues
5. Treat personal information obtained in a professional capacity as private and confidential
6. Provide impartial, honest and accurate information in relation to nursing care and health care products
7. Support the health, wellbeing and informed decision making of people requiring or receiving care
8. Promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in the relationship between nurses and people receiving care
9. Maintain and build on the community's trust and confidence in the nursing profession
10. Practice nursing reflectively and ethically.

University of Tasmania Rules for Misconduct and Discipline

University of Tasmania rules and procedures for addressing cases of general misconduct are listed under Ordinance No. 9 Student Discipline. The following excerpt from Ordinance No. 9 is relevant to professional experience placement and provides examples of general misconduct and possible disciplinary action relating to risk of injury to self or others, occurrence of damage to property or continued disruption to others.

2.1. Acts of general misconduct

2.1.1 A student commits an act of general misconduct if the student:

- (a) fails to comply with a reasonable direction of a member of staff of the university, given in order to ensure the safety of any

person, the preservation of any property or the maintenance of good order; or

- (b) breaches an ordinance or the university's rules; or
- (c) harasses or discriminates against any person on university premises; or
- (d) obstructs or interferes with the proper use of any of the facilities, resources or equipment of the university by any student or staff member or any other person duly authorised to use the facilities, resources or equipment; or
- (e) disrupts or causes unreasonable interruption to a lecture, tutorial, or any other form of teaching, learning or research activity.

2.4 Immediate exclusion and suspension if risk of injury, damage or disruption

2.4.1 Despite any other provision of this ordinance, the Executive Director, Finance and Administration may authorise, orally or in writing, the immediate exclusion of a student from the university premises and suspend their enrolment if the Executive Director Finance and Administration reasonably believes that the student:

- (a) is behaving, or is likely to behave, in such a way as to pose a serious risk of injury to themselves, other students or members of staff, or a serious risk of significant damage to property; or
- (b) has failed to comply with previous reasonable directions of a member of staff of the University, and has repeatedly disrupted the activities of the University, including intimidation or harassment of staff or students; or
- (c) has persistently breached University rules in such a way as to cause disruption to the activities of the University, including intimidation or harassment of students or members of staff.
- (d)

Withdrawal from Professional Experience Placement

Undergraduate students of nursing can, in certain circumstances, such as unsafe or unprofessional conduct, be withdrawn from a professional experience placement. Students will be withdrawn from clinical placement if they demonstrate behaviour that affects patient care, safety of self or others, and/or due to poor clinical performance (see SNM Assessment policy).

Students are expected to be aware of the ANMC Code of Ethics for Nurses and Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses. Failure to abide by the requirements of the codes can result in a withdrawal from the clinical agency and subsequent failure of the relevant unit of study.

A student may be withdrawn from or be deemed unable to commence or continue a professional experience placement by the SNM Head of School if:

- the student has committed an act of misconduct as defined within [University of Tasmania Ordinance No. 9](#);

- the student's behaviour has breached the professional conduct, discipline requirements or other rules of the professional experience placement agency; or
- there is an increased risk of injury or misadventure involving the student.

PROCEDURE CHECKLISTS FOR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT STAKEHOLDERS

Professional experience placements involve a number of stakeholders, each with responsibilities for ensuring the occurrence of optimal learning experiences within a safe, professional working environment. It is important that each stakeholder is aware of what is expected of the SNM, health care agency, clinical teacher/facilitator, preceptor and student.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery has the responsibility to:

- Formalise professional experience placement agreements with health care agencies to ensure that placement arrangements include all components listed in the [UTAS Practicum Placement of Students - Policy](#).
- Provide the health care agency with:
 - Contact details for the relevant SNM Practice Unit Coordinator;
 - Contact details for an SNM administrative staff member;
 - All SNM policies relating to professional experience practice and placement;
 - Arrangements for communication such as structured site visits by academic staff and phone contact during student placements for the purposes of clinical assessment, feedback and preceptor mentoring;
 - A process for discussing the student's professional experience placement evaluation.
- Provide clinical teachers/facilitators and preceptors with:
 - Copies of relevant SNM student Professional Experience Workbooks where relevant;
 - Course and unit outlines, which clearly state professional experience placement learning and assessment procedures;
 - FHS Infectious Disease Policy;
 - Notice of any students requiring individual support;
 - The SNM assessment policy; and
 - A list of names of students attending professional experience placement and forms to complete in cases of student absences.
- Ensure adequate communication between the student, unit coordinator and clinical placement officer in the lead up to and during professional experience placement.
- Provide all stakeholders with the SNM Issues Resolution Communication Procedure for the resolution of issues relating to academic progress that occur during placements.
- Confirm placement numbers and arrangements with the health care agency at least one month prior to students beginning placement.

- Ensure that academics, who are Registered Nurses, act according to their obligations under the Registered Nurses Code of Conduct in the occurrence of any unsafe practice by a student.

The Health Care Agency has the responsibility to:

- Implement the arrangements identified within the UTAS/Agency Workplace Learning Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding.
- Provide students with orientation to their workplace (including any special conditions).
- Aim to provide professional experience practice learning opportunities that relate to the learning objectives and assessment procedures identified in the students' unit outlines.
- Provide the required level of supervision and guidance for students on placement.
- Where applicable, provide a mechanism for academic staff to liaise with registered nurses for the purposes of clinical assessment, feedback and preceptor mentoring.

Clinical Teachers/Facilitators have the responsibility to:

- Comply with the Nursing Board of Tasmania [Standards for the Supervision of Students in Practice Setting 2006](#).
- Abide by the [Scope of Nursing Practice Decision Making Framework 2006](#), in particular the Guiding Principles for Delegation to Students of Nursing.
- Work under the supervision of the SNM Unit Coordinator.
- Become familiar with the professional experience placement learning objectives and assessment procedures listed in the course and unit outline.
- Become familiar with relevant SNM student Professional Experience Practice Workbooks.
- Sign off student Attendance Sheets.
- Assist students to access patient case loads which provide a safe learning experience that is relevant to their course learning objectives.
- Role model professional practice behaviour in accordance with the principles and rules identified within the ANMC Code of Conduct. Provide constructive, timely guidance and professional feedback to students to assist in their development during placement.
- Assist students to critically reflect upon clinical learning experiences in order to facilitate learning.
- Provide accurate, realistic and fair assessment of student performance.
- Conduct debriefing sessions on a regular basis during student placement.
- Complete all marking of student clinical work and assessment documentation in a timely manner.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Sign the 'Letter of Offer' on entrance into the Bachelor of Nursing Course.
- Complete an SNM Student Placement Agreement prior to each professional experience placement.
- Provide the SNM Clinical Placement Officer with a record of their National Police Certificate in accordance with the SNM [Police Check Policy and Procedures](#).
- Become familiar with the FHS [Infectious Disease Policy](#) and, by following the procedure and completing forms for students contained within, provide:
 - The SNM Clinical Placement Officer with a record of their Immunisation Status.
- Become familiar with the professional experience learning objectives and assessment procedure listed in their unit outline.
- Become familiar, and act in accordance with the health care agency's policies and procedures in relation to the [Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995](#), in particular:
 - Occupational Health & Safety; and
 - Harassment & Discrimination.
- Clear any conflicting work commitments for the duration of clinical placement.
- Arrive for each shift at least 5 minutes prior to commencement and advise the supervisor regarding departure from workplace.
- Adhere to the individual health care agency's guidelines as they relate to personal presentation.
- Adhere to the SNM dress code and wear the identification badge at all times.
- Exhibit professional behaviour, in accordance with the principles and rules identified within the Code of Conduct in Professional experience placement of this policy, and be accountable to self, the patient/client, the preceptor, the nursing profession and the health care agency.
- Discuss the implementation of any individual support requirements with clinical teachers/facilitators and preceptors.
- Be proactive in identifying learning opportunities relevant to the learning objectives of their unit and seek sign off on completed practice requirements in a timely manner.
- Be familiar with and undertake practice in accordance with the Nursing Board of Tasmania [Standards for the Supervision of Students in Practice Setting 2006](#).
- Receive constructive guidance and professional feedback from clinical teachers/facilitators and preceptors in a professional manner.
- Critically reflect upon their own performance in order to optimise all learning experiences.
- Maintain self motivation, employ stress management techniques and ensure adequate rest is taken (Seek support from UTAS Student Services if required).

- Adhere to the procedures contained within the [Conflict Resolution](#) section of this policy when issues occur during professional experience placements.
- Notify the appropriate people when unable to attend placement.

STUDENT PLACEMENT AGREEMENT

The SNM aims to ensure that students of nursing are afforded quality clinical placements, and are not discriminated against whilst on placement. Some students may have extenuating circumstances which require accommodating through the development of individual strategies. The University also has to ensure that any student on placement does not present a potential threat to the health or well being of patients, health care agency staff and the general public.

In order to assist the SNM to meet its duty of care obligations and for students of nursing to be aware of their rights and responsibilities, students are required to read, complete and sign a **Student Placement Agreement**. Where required, the relevant SNM Unit Coordinator will discuss and negotiate with individual students any additional arrangements and support that may be needed, and then also sign the agreement.

IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS

The Faculty of Health Science (FHS) [Infectious Disease Policy](#) provides direction related to infectious diseases and immunisation protocols for students undertaking professional experience placements in health care settings. The onus to comply with the policy rests solely with the students and the students will be required to sign a declaration that states they have both read and understood the policy. The student declaration form must be completed before the students will be permitted to commence professional experience placement.

It is important to note that if a student is undertaking professional experience practice within NSW they must comply with the [Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination policy](#) which states that, students cannot undertake employment or clinical placement within health facilities unless they can demonstrate complete protection against all the specified infectious diseases covered by this Policy and have documentation of their TB status as outlined in *Appendix 1 Occupational TB screening strategy*.

POLICE RECORD CHECKS

The SNM has clear duty of care obligations to all people involved in professional experience placements in health care agencies. The University does not require students to undertake a police record check as a condition of enrolment in the Bachelor of Nursing program. Students are however, required to undertake a National Criminal History Record Check as a condition of eligibility for professional experience placement. SNM students who do not provide either their current original National Police Certificate or their NSW Clinical Placement Authority Card to the Clinical Placement Officer for sighting will not be able to undertake professional experience placement.

Students are therefore required to undertake a national criminal history record check prior to professional experience placement. Full details of the criminal history record check procedure and forms can be accessed from the SNM website. [Police Check Policy and Procedures](#)

CONFIDENTIALITY

SNM students will be exposed to confidential clinical records and discussions relating to patient/client care. This information must not be divulged or discussed in any manner that does not relate directly to that person's care. Breaches of confidentiality are subject to legal action. Some health care agencies will require students to sign a declaration that they will ensure confidentiality is maintained. The SNM supports and approves of this process where required. Furthermore, all students are required to read and sign a Student Placement Agreement, which outlines information related to confidentiality.

Students have the responsibility to ensure confidentiality of information, including patient, staff and other. Students must also take care to ensure the anonymity of clients/patients when writing up notes, episodes of practice and any other document produced as part of their course.

This responsibility is clearly identified in the following conduct statement and explanation from the ANMC Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses in Australia 2008:

'Conduct Statement 5'

Nurses treat personal information obtained in a professional capacity as private and confidential

Explanatory Statements

1. Nurses have ethical and legal obligations to protect the privacy of people requiring care. This encompasses treating as confidential information gained in the course of the relationship between those persons and nurses and restricting the use of information gathered for professional purposes only.
2. Nurses, where relevant, inform a person that in order to provide competent care, it is necessary to disclose information that may be important to the clinical decision making by other members of a health care team or a nominated carer.
3. Nurses where practicable, seek consent from persons requiring or receiving care or their representatives before disclosing information. In the absence of consent, nurses use professional judgement regarding the necessity to disclose particular details, giving due consideration to the interests, wellbeing, health and safety of the person in their care. Nurses recognise that they may be required by law to disclose certain information for professional purposes.

UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS AND ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

The SNM has a professional dress code which must be adhered to by students who undertake professional experience placement in most health care agencies. The dress code is designed to be practical for delivering care, minimising potential cross infection, promoting safety for patients and promoting UTAS SNM.

Prescribed uniform is to be worn by students undertaking professional experience placements in the BN program, with the exception of some mental health and community placements where there may be no uniform requirement. In these instances the SNM Clinical Placement Officer will advise those students who are not required to wear SNM uniform.

Any student who is dressed inappropriately may be sent home from professional experience placement, with time lost having to be made up at a later stage.

The prescribed SNM uniform is as follows:

Essentials:

- Identification badge. The UTAS student ID card, placed in a clear plastic name badge, is used for this purpose.
- White or navy polo shirt
- Navy blue trousers, tailored shorts, culottes or skirt
- Navy blue or black flat enclosed toe shoes

Optional:

- Navy blue jacket or blazer
- Navy blue cardigan
- Navy blue 'V' neck jumper
- Non-wool garments are recommended to reduce carriage of harmful bacteria.
- Hospital gowns are not considered to be a part of the SNM uniform, and as such should only be worn when health care agency procedures dictate.

Personal presentation:

Students must adhere to individual health care agency guidelines.

Essential items to be taken on clinical placement:

Students are required to carry the following items at all times during professional experience placement:

- SNM identification badge affixed to the front of the uniform in a position where it is clearly visible
- Watch with a sweep second hand
- Blue or black pen and a pocket-sized notepad
- Calculator
- Learning objectives for the current professional experience placement
- Unit workbook
- Medicare Card
- Mobile phones can only be used in accordance with the relevant health care agency policy.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT ATTENDANCE

Private Work Commitments and Professional Experience Placement

Students who have private employment are advised that attendance and performance in professional experience placement must take precedence over their work commitments.

Wherever possible, work commitments should be cleared for the duration of the placement.

Attendance Requirements

The attendance requirement for professional experience placements is set at 100% to ensure that students have optimum exposure to the learning environment. Minor variation to practice attendance may be negotiated in situations where students are experiencing extreme extenuating circumstances. The SNM is also aware that students attending professional experience placement whilst severely ill may pose risk of infection to patients whose immunity may already be compromised and also place colleagues and themselves at risk.

Students' Attendance Sheets must be signed by the clinical teacher/facilitator or preceptor on completion of the professional experience placement.

Missed Attendance

In the event of being unable to attend a clinical placement, the student has the responsibility to:

- Notify the clinical teacher/facilitator and the health care agency administration office prior to the commencement of the shift to be missed.
- Notify the SNM Unit Coordinator the same day.
- Obtain a medical certificate for any missed time exceeding two days.
- Present the medical certificate, along with an application to complete the missed attendance time, to the SNM Unit Coordinator at the earliest opportunity.

Completing a Period of Missed Attendance

Students are not automatically permitted to make-up missed clinical placement time. The Director of Clinical Education and Unit Coordinators consider all absences individually and allocate an additional period of placement where appropriate. Additional time in practice always occurs in conjunction with health care agencies, and is only offered if the agency can accept the student for this additional period of time. If a significant period of placement time is missed, it will be necessary for students to repeat the unit.

If a student fails a unit with a clinical component, and is required to repeat the unit, all professional experience placement attached to the unit must also be repeated.

ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES ON PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

The University of Tasmania's [Student Insurance](#) program provides public liability and personal accident cover for SNM students participating in clinical placements. Health care agencies have obligations to students under the [Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995](#). Students on placement should act in accordance with the individual agency's workplace policy and procedure in the event of an accident or injury occurring.

If an accident or injury involving a student on placement occurs, it is important, in order to protect all people involved, that the following procedure must be undertaken:

- The student, with the Clinical Teacher/Facilitator or Preceptor, completes an Accident & Incident Form from the particular health care agency, with a copy to be forwarded to the SNM Unit Coordinator within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

- The SNM Clinical Placement Officer will then forward a copy of the Accident & Incident Form to the UTAS OH&S Unit to ensure all parties receive notification.
- In the case of occupational exposure to body fluids or needle-stick injuries, procedures must be followed in accordance with the individual health care agency protocol.
- If medical treatment is required, costs incurred by students beyond that covered under the Medicare Scheme may be claimed from the University.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Health care agencies operate no differently to other community environments where people have to work in close proximity, sometimes under stressful circumstances in which unequal power relationships are involved. Issues relating to personal interaction can arise during professional experience placement. Students should attempt to resolve these issues on an individual basis with the other person or with the assistance of the Clinical Teacher/Facilitator or Unit Coordinator.

Harassment or Discrimination

Students are afforded the same rights as employees of health care agencies in relation to harassment and discrimination under the [Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995](#). If an incident occurs, students should refer to and act in accordance with the relevant health care agency's workplace policy and procedures for dealing with harassment and discrimination.

Issues Affecting Academic Progress

In the event that conflict impacts upon the learning experience within a particular practice environment, students should seek to resolve the issue in accordance with the SNM Issues Resolution Communication Procedure.

'Issues Resolution Communication Procedure'

To ensure that issues which impact on students' *progress through their course* are addressed and resolved in a timely manner, School of Nursing & Midwifery students are expected to notify the Unit Coordinator via email as to the nature of the issue. These issues include:

1. Personal, family or health issue affecting attendance or performance.
2. Assessment.
3. Health condition or disability affecting attendance or performance.
4. Interpersonal or communication misunderstanding on clinical placement.

Once notified the Unit Coordinator will respond via email to students to:

- address the issues, with other staff as necessary; and/or
- arrange a meeting with the student; and/or
- refer the student to appropriate UTAS services for students'.

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

Clinical Teachers, Preceptors and students must be aware of and abide by the Nursing Board of Tasmania [Scope of Nursing Practice Decision Making Framework 2006](#), in particular the Guiding Principles for Delegation to Students of Nursing.

SNM students undertaking professional experience placement must abide by both the procedures for medication management documented within the NBT [Standards of Medication Management for Nurses and Midwives 2008](#) and the policies of individual health care agencies.

The 3 Key Statements requiring compliance by students on clinical placement in relation to medication management are:

1. Activities should not be delegated to or be accepted by students that require them to function beyond their level of educational preparation or competence.
2. Activities undertaken by the student, including administration of medications should be documented by the student and must be countersigned by the registered nurse/preceptor supervising the student in accordance with individual organisation policy.
3. Whilst a student may undertake some activities, for which they have been observed and assessed as competent to undertake under indirect supervision, **all** activities that are invasive, complex and/or involve medication management **must** be undertaken under **direct supervision** of a registered nurse.

ASSESSMENT IN PRACTICE

In order to achieve a pass in BN practice units students are required to achieve a satisfactory result for the assessment that relates to performance in practice.

The Nursing Board of Tasmania provides the **standard** for the assessment of students during professional experience practice within the UTAS SNM Bachelor of Nursing Program. The NBT assessment standard, located within their publication, is listed below: [Standards for the Supervision of Students in Practice Setting 2006](#)

'Section 3.0'

Assessment of Students

- The health care facility and all relevant staff should demonstrate an understanding of the needs of participants in relation to what is required to assist them to gain the necessary knowledge, attitude and skills for competent practice.
- Preceptors may utilise a variety of sources to gather data about a participant's competence.
- Preceptors should observe and assess activities undertaken by students and should document their assessment of the students performance in accordance with the relevant ANMC Competency Standards and relevant nursing specialty competency standards.
- Feedback should be given to the student with regard to their performance at regular and agreed intervals.

- Documentation completed must be relevant to the program being undertaken by the student.
- Relevant education providers and students should be provided with a copy of the student's assessment documentation by the preceptor.'

Procedures for student assessment within the Bachelor of Nursing program, including assessment in professional experience placement, are documented in the [SNM Assessment Policy](#). The **criteria** for assessment relate directly to the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) Competencies for Registration as a Nurse.

Learning objectives and assessment tasks are linked to specific ANMC competencies and identified in each unit outline during the six semesters of the Bachelor of Nursing program. The student is expected to attain those specific competencies relevant to the placement.

Students must be able to meet all of these competencies in order to graduate with a Bachelor of Nursing degree and thus become a Registered Nurse. Students should be aware of the competencies and be working towards their achievement in all clinical areas.

The SNM Director of Teaching and Learning may defer the commencement of a student in a professional experience placement where the pre-requisite theoretical studies have not been satisfactorily completed by the student. If the period of deferral is of such length as to affect the academic progress of the student, the SNM Director of Teaching and Learning shall write to the student to provide notice of the reasons for deferral and advise the student as to the requirements for satisfactory completion of the practice unit.

Accommodating variations to practice

In cases of extenuating circumstances students may receive special consideration in particular practice areas. The Unit Coordinator in consultation with the student, and BN Coordinator if required, will identify alternative strategies to accommodate the necessary variation to practice. In these instances an SNM Learning Agreement documenting the specifics of the variation to practice is developed to ensure that the ANMC competencies for the unit can be appropriately met.

Learning Agreements

If a student is experiencing significant difficulty with their academic progress due to extenuating circumstances or if attendance or behaviour issues arise, a learning agreement can be developed. A learning agreement is a document that lists strategies to address issues, maximise the opportunity for learning and assist with academic progress. These strategies, along with a process for implementation and review, are agreed to by the Unit Coordinator and the student.

Withdrawal from professional experience placement

In accordance with the SNM Assessment Policy, a student may be withdrawn from a professional experience placement by the SNM Head of School or Director of Teaching and Learning if the student is consistently unable, after due guidance and instruction, to perform the skills required at an appropriate standard as determined by supervising university or professional experience practice supervisors.

Unsatisfactory Clinical Assessment

In accordance with the SNM Assessment Policy, a clinical teacher/facilitator may assess a student's performance in practice as unsatisfactory for a number of reasons. These may include unsafe practice, poorly developed clinical skills, or illness during the placement

making achievement of clinical objectives difficult. Unsatisfactory clinical assessments are considered at the end of the semester, in conjunction with other results in that unit. Additional time in practice may be offered in exceptional circumstances in line with identified practice and assessment criteria that may be outlined in the Unit Outline and in accordance with the SNM Assessment Policy.

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