



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

# Bachelor of Health Sciences Program

Placement program handbook - HLTH3001



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## Placement Support

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# Introduction

## The Bachelor of Health Sciences degree

The Bachelor of Health Sciences provides a comprehensive overview of preventive health and the health care system, which equips graduates with the skills for a career in health or the foundations to undertake a clinical program such as medicine, physiotherapy or dietetics.

Students study a wide range of areas including the biomedical sciences (e.g. anatomy, physiology), public health, preventive health (e.g. health promotion, physical activity, nutrition), the business of health (e.g. health systems, management) and professional practice (e.g. health law and ethics). A major in nutrition, health promotion or public health can be completed.

## HITH3001 Practicum in Health Sciences

HLTH3001 Practicum in Health Sciences has been developed to provide final year Health Sciences students with hands-on work experience in a health-related work environment. The course will draw from the students' accumulated knowledge and skill base and prepare them for future employment within the health care industry. The course also delivers important vocational skills training.

# Aims and objectives

## The aims of HLTH3001 are for students to:

1. Gain a minimum of 90 hrs of supervised work experience in a health-related work setting;
2. Integrate key professional skills and competencies and apply them successfully in a real-world environment;
3. Develop professional modes of behaviour suitable for the workplace;
4. Broaden the student's understanding of employment options within the health sector; and
5. Develop employment seeking skills.

## After successfully completing this course students should be able to:

1. Work effectively in a health-related work environment;
2. Successfully integrate and apply their Health Sciences knowledge and skill base;
3. Understand the ethical and civic responsibilities associated with professional practice in a work place; and
4. Develop an understanding of industry expectations in relation to recruitment.

## Course structure and attendance

The Practicum in Health Sciences has academic content and processes as well as committing students to 90 hours in a work placement over the course of the semester. Students will complete 13 weeks in the host organisation working the equivalent of 9am – 5pm, one (1) day a week for the duration of the placement.

*Under some circumstances, other arrangements can be negotiated but must be discussed with the host organisation and approved by the University prior to the commencement of the placement.*

Students are required to keep a log or timesheet of their daily and accumulated hours and to have this signed off by their field supervisor. An example of a placement work log and timesheet is included in this booklet (Appendix i).

Students are also required to attend HLTH3001 classes facilitated by the university on campus and to complete all assessment items for the course. These workshops and assessments are in addition to the 90 hours required for the placement.

Most students will be undertaking two or three other university courses during the same period in which they undertake work placement and these additional commitments will influence the days in which students are available to attend their fieldwork placement.



# Placement students

## Student responsibilities

It is very important that you take your work placement responsibilities seriously.

Here are some good reasons for doing so:

1. The work placement supervisors have put in much of their time to make your stay as worthwhile as possible;
2. If you fail to make a good impression you may be jeopardising the Program for future students;
3. A good impression may get you a good reference; and
4. Your learning will increase.

## Dress code

It is important that you dress appropriately. Remember that while you are on your work placement, you are representing The University of Queensland.

All Bachelor of Health Sciences students on work placement are expected to wear The University of Queensland business shirts. Students should wear black trousers or black skirts with closed-in shoes.

You will be able to purchase the shirt online and collect your order from the Faculty of Medicine office on the Herston campus.

## Punctuality

Given that your work placement supervisor has scheduled activities for you that will likely include other people, it is very important that you arrive at work on time every day. If, for reasons beyond your control, you are unable to arrive on time, it is critical that you notify your work placement supervisor as soon as possible.

Remember: it is a great idea to plan to get to work a little early rather than just on time.

## Do your very best

Doing your best will maximise your learning and make a good impression on the work placement supervisor.

## Be polite

Always be polite in the workplace. In the event someone is rude to you or behaving in an inappropriate manner, you should take the matter up with your work placement supervisor or contact Dr Allyson Mutch as soon as possible.

## Follow the work placement rules

It is important that you follow rules regarding workplace occupational health and safety, punctuality, privacy and work methods. Your work placement supervisor should make sure that you are fully aware of the rules.

## Ask questions

Feel free to ask questions so you can maximise your learning. It is up to you to ensure that you get the most out of your work placement.

## Enjoy yourself

This is a great opportunity for you to experience what it may be like to work in your chosen career.

## Pre-commencement checklist

You must go through this checklist and ensure that you have ticked all the boxes.

- Do you have your Blue card?
- Have you checked on which day you are starting and which days you will be working?
- Do you have the right address?
- Do you know exactly where to go on your first day?
- Have you worked out how you will get there?
- Have you calculated how long it will take to get there, especially in peak hour traffic?
- Do you know the name of your supervisor or contact person?
- Do you know the telephone number of your supervisor/contact person?
- Do you have a name and contact number of an alternative person in case your supervisor/contact person
- Do you have the contact number of your academic supervisor, Dr Allyson Mutch?



# Placement providers

## Student responsibilities

Thank you for agreeing to accept a uQ Bachelor of Health Sciences student into your workplace. The Bachelor of Health Sciences has a strong focus on industry relevance, links with the community and is committed to providing the best possible personal and professional development to students. Practicum placements offer students opportunities to link their academic knowledge with professional experience. Placement familiarises students with the culture of health care in a range of agency and organisational settings.

A student placement also provides the organisations with opportunities to forge links with the university and contribute to experienced practitioner knowledge and expertise. These learning opportunities are only available to students through an organisation's willingness, commitment and generosity to supervise a student placement. **We value your contribution to student education.** Thank you.

We encourage organisations to familiarise themselves with the placement agreement which you should have received from us. If you have not received an agreement please contact the Placement officers – at [med.clinicaladmin@uq.edu.au](mailto:med.clinicaladmin@uq.edu.au) or **3346 4922**.

## Placement activities

Some examples of suitable learning experiences for students may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Assist in groups, community consultations, advocacy, training or educational activities and programs;
- Undertake administrative duties such as preparing client information kits, staff resource kits;
- Administration and scoring of assessments, questionnaires, surveys;
- Maintain records and reports, including reviewing files and preparing summary reports;
- Assist with special projects (e.g. program evaluation, preparation and organisation of an event, development of a new program or service);
- Assist with writing a funding submission or fund raising activities;
- Gather data for research, social histories or service/program evaluations;
- Learn to write reports;
- Review new educational material and videos for potential use with clients;
- Attend conferences, seminars and training sessions; and
- Visit other agencies and services.



# The roles of participants during placement

The placement is a co-operative endeavour involving four participants:

The **student** – a Bachelor of Health Sciences student seeks to engage and reflect upon health service methods and approaches.

The **placement supervisor** – an appropriately experienced employee of the host organisation who assumes responsibility for the facilitation of the student's learning, including the provision of supervision and evaluation of the student's work performance.

The **course coordinator** – the university lecturer, who is responsible for the academic content of the course and the provision of university-based workshops that run concurrently with work placement hours. The course coordinator, in collaboration with the **placement officer**, is also responsible for negotiating and allocating placements to students as well as developing policies, procedures and evaluation standards for the work placement course.

Everyone involved in the placement works together to facilitate the student's engagement with, and reflection on, the health system. The information presented below outlines the roles of all who are involved in the student placement program.

## The student

During the fieldwork placement the student performs the following roles:

- *Adult learner*, who is expected to participate as fully and independently as possible in all aspects of the work placement including complying with organisational rules, procedures, roles and responsibilities for staff.
- *Employee in training* bound by the same ethical obligations towards the organisation, customers, clients, consumers and colleagues that apply to all employees.
- *Action researcher and action learner*, who is expected to reflect on the links between what they see, how they react, what they do and what they know.

Work placement providers can expect the student will:

- Have basic skills in written and oral communication in order to relate to a wide range of people including an ability to reflect on the use of self in professional interactions;
- Have basic skills to take initiative on a project under supervision;
- Have foundation knowledge of methods and approaches in health sciences relevant to community practice;
- Have an understanding of ethical practice, including maintenance of confidentiality with respect to information obtained in the host organisation;
- Apply themselves wholeheartedly to the tasks set and achieving the organisation's goals;

- Be prepared for active, intentional learning in the workplace; and
- Be provided with ongoing information, support and advice from University staff as well as peer support and interaction with other students during their placement.



## The placement provider

The placement provider is usually an appropriately experienced employee of the host organisation where the work placement occurs. The supervisor facilitates student learning through performance of three key roles:

### *An administrative role:*

- Organising a physical place for the student within the organisation (e.g., desk, access to resources such as a phone, photocopier, stationery, computer and files);
- Creating a meaningful role for the student through the assignment of work that will accomplish organisational goals;
- Reviewing and evaluating the quality of the student's work; and
- Ensuring the student completes 90 hours in the workplace (e.g., signing timesheets).

### *An educational role:*

- Assisting the student to develop appropriate learning goals;
- Providing opportunities for the student to observe, engage and reflect upon a range of practices within the organisational context;
- Providing opportunities for skill development;
- Providing opportunities for the student to learn about the organisation including its purpose, goals, objectives, structures, cultures and functions;
- Facilitating and integrating student learning opportunities;
- Providing regular guidance, feedback and supervision;
- Sharing knowledge and experiences with the student; and
- Assisting students to establish new networks of people they can call on for advice or resources in their placement and future careers.

### *A supportive role:*

- Establishing an emotionally safe and supportive work environment for the student;

- Buffering the student from workplace politics or issues that will impede their progress; and
- Being a sounding board when students are faced with a decision or a problem.

Organisation supervisors conduct their support role through a range of strategies including informal supervision and guidance and modelling of professional conduct. Most supervisors devote about an hour per week for individual formal supervision dependent upon the student's abilities and needs, the complexity of the organisational functions and the responsibilities the student carries. The amount of supervision is usually negotiated at the pre-placement interview or early in the fieldwork placement.

The supervisor also assesses the student's work performance at the end of the placement using a pro forma provided by the university (Appendix 2).

Supervisors will also be invited to attend the School of Public Health seminar series that takes place at the Herston campus. Please advise us if you would like to receive notification of these seminars.

## The University Co-ordinator

**The University contact is the course co-ordinator for HLTH3001, Dr Allyson Mutch who is familiar with the guidelines and framework of the work placement provided by the University. The co-ordinator performs the following roles:**

- *Explaining key aspects* of the work placement and the requirements for both the students and the host organisations; and
- *Consultation and support* to the host organisation, and the student regarding teaching and learning strategies appropriate to the fieldwork placement.

## Placement Officer

The Placement Officers are responsible for placement agreements and compliance documentation.

They can be contacted at [med.clinicaladmin@uq.edu.au](mailto:med.clinicaladmin@uq.edu.au) or 3346 4922





# Assessment of work placement and academic tasks

One of the conditions of passing the placement is that students must complete the required number of placement hours in addition to the compulsory attendance at the academic university-based workshops and completion of the assignments associated with the academic coursework.

Towards the end of the placement, supervisors are asked to provide feedback on the student's performance on the final evaluation form (Appendix 2). The form is a simple checklist of the student's performance in a number of key areas. It also provides space for brief written comments which students can use to reflect on their achievements, learning, career goals and areas for improvement and further study.

## Placement policies

### Process for negotiation of placement difficulties

When difficulties arise on placement, either the student or the organisation supervisor must contact the university course co-ordinator or the placement officer. After discussion and clarification of the issues with the university placement staff, the person reporting the difficulties is encouraged to raise the issues directly with the other party and to advise that the university has been consulted. Such a discussion between the two parties may clarify and resolve the difficulties and the placement can proceed and incorporate this experience into the overall learning. If this is the outcome, the university course co-ordinator should be advised.

The person reporting the difficulties may prefer the university course co-ordinator to be involved in a three-

way discussion with the other party and this should be arranged as soon as possible. The purpose of this meeting is to identify the difficulties, clarify the expectations, and re-negotiate the responsibilities.

Possible outcomes are:

A commitment by both student and supervisor to the continuation of placement, a willingness to continue to address identified issues of difference in the future and a plan for doing this, or a request by either the student or supervisor to terminate the placement. It is acknowledged that some placements will not prove to be viable and this can be for a number of reasons including the relationship between the student and the supervisor, organisational issues, reaction to the type of learning experiences available and suitability of the student to the particular placement opportunities.

Any one of the participants in the placement process is able to raise the issue of whether a placement is viable.

The issues must be discussed with the other parties involved and every effort must be made for this to occur in a joint meeting that includes the student, the supervisor and the university co-ordinator before a decision to terminate the placement is reached.




## Student presentations

At the conclusion of the placement students are required to develop a poster presentation outlining their work placement and the tasks that they were involved in at the organisation. Organisation supervisors are invited to the presentation session. This is organised in the last week of semester 2.



# Appendix 1

## Example of placement work log and timesheet:

| Date       | Hours on placement | Major Learning Activity   | Supervisor Signature  |
|------------|--------------------|---|---|
| 8th March  | 7                  | I spent the day with my supervisor undertaking orientation to the organisation and I now have an understanding of how the organisation works. |  |
| 9th March  | 7                  | I gained an understanding of the organisation policy around working with clients.   |  |
| 15th March | 7                  | I attended a meeting regarding the project which I will be working on with the rest of the project team.                                      |  |



# Appendix 2

## Supervisor evaluation form:

HLTH3001 - Practicum in Health Sciences  
 Bachelor of Health Sciences Placement Course  
 Supervisor Evaluation

Name of supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

We would appreciate it if you would complete this evaluation form in relation to the student who completed a placement with your organisation. Please tick the appropriate box.

|    |  | Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Neutral                  | Disagree                 | Strongly Disagree        |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | The student has a positive attitude to work.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | The student has good communication skills.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | The student works well in a team.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | The student applies him/herself well to work.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | The student is good at problem solving.                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | The student recognises the need for personal and professional development.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. | The student communicates effectively with other professionals and clients.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. | The student demonstrates appropriate knowledge relevant to the work setting. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please highlight any of the student's key strengths

Please highlight any areas for improvement

Any further comments?

Do you agree to this information being shared with the student, who was placed at your organisation?

Yes

No

Thank you for completing this evaluation and for providing such a valuable opportunity for the student.

## Contact details and further information

Faculty of Medicine

**E:** [BHSPlacements@sph.uq.edu.au](mailto:BHSPlacements@sph.uq.edu.au)

**T:** 07 3346 4922

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