

Professional Experience Handbook

A Reference Guide for Supervising Teachers and Teacher Education Students





Want to upgrade your teaching qualifications?

Partner with a leading innovator in online study

If you would like to increase your skills and knowledge, or change focus in your teaching career, UNE has a range of postgraduate courses to help you achieve your goals. We provide postgraduate degrees for teachers and professional staff, including teachers working toward an advanced level of accreditation.

Study with the online experts

There are now many 'johnny-come-lately' universities in online education. UNE is the only online University that has been awarded the maximum 5 stars for Overall Satisfaction, every year for 13 years.* UNE has been delivering distance education since 1955 – that's longer than any other Australian university. Perhaps that's why our students continue to rate us so highly for student satisfaction and teaching quality.

Courses available through online study:

- **Bachelor of Education (In-service Conversion)**
For teachers wishing to upskill to a new teaching area
- **Graduate Certificate in Education Studies**
Specialisations available in: Careers and Transition Education, Gifted and Talented: Teaching for High Potential, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).
- **Graduate Certificate in eLearning**
- **Master of Education**
Specialisations available in: Comparative Education, eLearning, Gifted and Talented Education, Indigenous Australian Education, Literature and New Literacies, Special Education, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL-EAL/D).

For more information visit:

une.edu.au/education-upgrade

or call 1800 818 865



* The Good Universities Guide ratings 2007-2019.

Contents

Welcome	2
The Purpose of this Document	2
Professional Experience in Context	2
The UNE Office for Professional Learning (OPL) STAFF	2
Professional Experience at UNE	3
Eligibility for Teacher Education Students	3
Roles and Responsibilities	3
The Supervising Teacher	3
The Teacher Education Student	4
The Office for Professional Learning	4
The Professional Experience Placement – General Information	5
Conflict of Interest	5
Attendance and Make-up days	5
Medical Certificate	6
Excursions	6
Dress Code	6
Collaboration	6
Before Professional Experience	6
During Professional Experience	6
General Requirements for the Teacher Education Student	6
Withdrawal from a Professional Experience Placement by the Teacher Education Student	7
Assistance	7
Supervising Teacher	7
Teacher Education Student	7
Assessment	8
Assessing the Teacher Education Student	8
Assessment Criteria	8
Further Information Regarding the Assessment Indicators	8
Completing Evaluation for Teacher Education Students	9
Feedback	9
Evaluation	9
Teacher Education Student is Progressing Satisfactorily	10
Teacher Education Student is <i>At Risk of Failing</i>	10
Implementing the 'At Risk' Action Plan	11
Evaluating the Action Plan	11
Completing the <i>Professional Experience Report Form</i>	12
Satisfactory Result	12
Unsatisfactory Result	13
Grounds for Exclusion	13
Extension of Placement	14
Supporting Visits from UNE	14
Role of Professional Experience Liaison Officers	14
Legal Policies and Procedures	15
Privacy Laws	15
Insurance	15
Accident Insurance	15
Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)	15
Glossary	inside back cover

WELCOME

The Office for Professional Learning in the School of Education appreciates your willingness to mentor a University of New England teacher education student. This assistance is invaluable for our teacher education students and, more importantly, for education in Australia. Thank you.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The following information will provide you with succinct guidelines for successful supervision of the teacher education student for the duration of their professional experience placement. More information is available on the UNE website: une.edu.au/opl

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE IN CONTEXT

Professional Experience is a significant aspect of teacher education. It is within the school context that teacher education students can begin to apply the theoretical concepts developed in academic subjects to the practical realities of the classroom. This practice is best met when the University works collaboratively with placement schools/centres/agencies to ensure quality learning for teacher education students within each course. Placements are sequential to allow teacher education students to apply in the classroom setting the theoretical and pedagogical knowledge they learn throughout their degree.

The site-based program has been structured around the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* to enable teacher education students to develop:

- their **professional knowledge** of teacher education students and how they learn, subject content and how to teach that content to their students;
- their **professional practice** in relation to planning for and implementing effective teaching and learning, assessing, providing feedback and reporting on student learning, and creating challenging, supportive and safe learning environments by using effective classroom management skills;
- their **professional engagement** in professional learning to ensure continual improvement in their professional knowledge and practice, and their active engagement with colleagues, parents/carers and the community.

THE UNE OFFICE FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (OPL) STAFF

Manager

Tim Bartlett-Taylor

Student Support Team

Georgia Christiansen, Kirra Porter, Kim Vallance, Abby Cooper

Partnerships and Professional Learning Team

Brian Shumack, Sue Haydon, Jenny Sauer

Supervising Teacher Enquiries

Phone: +61 2 6773 3898

Email: peo@une.edu.au

This address is a service provided specifically for Teacher enquiries.

Teacher Education Student Enquiries

Phone: +61 2 6773 3898

Students are asked to contact the OPL through AskUNE

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AT UNE

Professional Experience placements provide teacher education students with opportunities to:

- broaden their experience, understanding and appreciation of the realities of schools/centres/agencies and their contexts;
- develop a greater understanding of the nature, needs and capacities of young people;
- deepen knowledge and understanding of curriculum;
- progressively develop effective teaching and management skills;
- enhance their capacity to construct, implement and evaluate programs of appropriate learning experiences;
- develop a critically self-reflective approach to teaching;
- develop an understanding and an appreciation of the role of teachers within both the school/centre/agency and its community; and
- develop a reflective understanding of the ways in which, as teacher education students, they are constructing their own sense of professional teacher identity.

Eligibility for Teacher Education Students

The following are required for eligibility to undertake professional experience:

- teacher education students must be enrolled in a UNE professional experience unit before undertaking a placement;
- no placement may commence until a school/centre/agency has been notified by the Office for Professional Learning that a teacher education student will be attending a placement; and
- teacher education student cannot commence a placement until they have received official notification from the Office for Professional Learning through a *Confirmation of Placement* email (any days commenced before receipt of this email will not be counted towards a professional experience)

It is the teacher education student's responsibility to ensure they meet any additional state/territory requirements for their placement.

UNE requires New South Wales teacher education students to have:

- an ASCIA Anaphylaxis Training e-certificate;
- obtained and maintained a valid 'Volunteer' Working with Children Check;
- completed the Department of Education Child Protection and Awareness online training module;
- obtained a 'Paid' Working with Children Check before the final, graduating placement.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following section outlines the roles of the:

- Supervising Teacher;
- Teacher education student;
- Office for Professional Learning.

The University relies on school/centre/agency personnel being fully aware of professional experience requirements. However, schools/centres/agencies are welcome to contact the Office for Professional Learning any time they require further support or clarification.

The Supervising Teacher

Before the commencement of the placement, the supervising teacher will:

- be sent an overview of the professional experience, relevant to the teacher education student's specific requirements for their unit of study and level of teacher education;
- become fully aware of the requirements for this particular professional experience placement as specified in the accompanying documentation;
- provide the teacher education student with background information about the class/students and, where appropriate, provide the teacher education student with work to prepare prior to the professional experience placement.

During the placement, the supervising teacher will:

- discuss the expected standards and routines of the classroom with the teacher education student at the beginning of the professional experience placement;
- introduce the teacher education student to the class/students so that the teacher education student is seen to be a respected teaching colleague;
- contact the Office for Professional Learning immediately if they require clarification or advice about any matters surrounding the professional experience placement;
- provide guidance by:
 - giving constructive feedback on lesson preparation and presentation;
 - checking lesson plans prior to implementation (UNE's directive to teacher education students is 'No Plan, No Teach');
 - providing on-going discussion and constructive feedback to the teacher education student;
 - participating in regular discussions and written evaluations of at least one lesson per day using the *Lesson Evaluation Sheet*
 - using the *Weekly Review* as an ongoing checklist throughout the placement;
- allow the teacher education student to observe him/her in the process of teaching, and discuss and share models of their own lesson planning/programming, strategies and implementation;

- encourage and support the teacher education student in understanding critical reflection of their own practice and observations and be honest in their evaluation of the teacher education student's ability and progress (supervising teachers should not feel obliged to pass a teacher education student if they have not met the required standard of teaching for the specific level of the placement or have not conducted themselves professionally;
- scan and email the 'At Risk' Action Plan to the Office for Professional Learning if the teacher education student is At Risk of Failing the placement. Discuss 'At Risk' Action Plan with the teacher education student to target areas for improvement.

For more information regarding the assessment process for professional experience, see the section titled *Assessing the Teacher Education Student*.

After the placement, the supervising teacher will:

- present the original copy of the *Professional Experience Report Form* to the teacher education student on the last day of the placement;
- scan and email the *Professional Experience Report Form*, the *Attendance Register* and the *Claim Form* to the Office for Professional Learning. The OPL staff is unable to finalise a teacher education student's unit until the *Professional Experience Report Form* has been submitted. We ask that *Professional Experience Report Forms* are submitted to the OPL within two weeks of the final day of placement to expedite this part of the process.

The Teacher Education Student

Before the commencement of the placement the teacher education student will:

- not be permitted to commence the placement unless they are enrolled in a unit with professional experience and the *Placement Form* has been processed, approved and have received a letter of confirmation from the OPL;
- have completed a Working with Children Check (or equivalent check if not in NSW), have full clearance and have completed all other mandatory requirements for placement (these must be completed and uploaded to *InPlace* before submitting a Placement Form);
- make contact and establish clear channels of communication with the supervising teacher to negotiate expectations and teaching load;
- be informed about the importance of professionalism (this includes punctuality, dress code, preparation, 'No Plan, No Teach' policy and confidentiality);
- be aware of the requirement for remaining at the school/centre/agency for the duration of the school/centre/agency day and beyond, if necessary, to attend staff meetings and extra duties;

- complete and lodge with the placement school/centre/agency the *Professional Experience Emergency Contact Form*;
- notify both the Office for Professional Learning and the placement school/centre/agency should the dates for their professional experience require amending.

During the placement, the teacher education student will:

- **NOT** be left solely in charge of the class or individual students at any time including, but not limited to, providing private transport for students to or from venues beyond the school/centre/agency grounds;
- be involved in all of the supervising teacher's duties attached to staff membership;
- adapt to the specific routines, policies, workplace health and safety, ethical constructs and ethos of the school/centre/agency;
- consult with the supervising teacher, practicum coordinator, school principal/centre director or the Office for Professional Learning if they are experiencing issues of any kind;
- contact the Office for Professional Learning **immediately** if for any reason they wish to withdraw from the placement;
- negotiate to make up **all** days missed during the placement, and contact the OPL with this information.
- Make-up days should occur **within two weeks** of the finish date of the placement.

After the placement the teacher education student will:

- take with them, the original copy of the *Professional Experience Report Form* on the last day of the placement (ensure that it has been signed, dated and stamped with school stamp);
- ensure all borrowed resources are returned to the school/centre/agency;
- make contact with or be contacted by the Office for Professional Learning if the result for their professional experience placement is *Unsatisfactory*.

The Office for Professional Learning

The Office for Professional Learning has administrative responsibility for all educationally based professional experience placements.

Before the commencement of the placement the Office for Professional Learning will:

- negotiate with industry partners to enhance access to quality opportunities in schools, services, centres and agencies in a variety of geographic locations;
- ensure teacher education students are appropriately placed and supported while on site with qualified staff and with quality documentation and procedures;

- ensure clear communication lines for university and school/centre/agency staff and teacher education students in relation to any issues relating to professional experience;
- ensure all teacher education students have complied with statutory regulations such as a Working with Children clearance, Department of Education Child Protection and Awareness Training module, and ASCIA Anaphylaxis Training, and are prepared for their placement;
- monitor teacher education students' pattern of experiences to ensure a diversity of settings and reduce potential issues associated with conflict of interest and fairness in relation to access to placements.

During the placement the Office for Professional Learning will:

- make initial contact with the supervising teacher by email to check that the teacher education student is settled and working appropriately;
- provide support to the school/centre/agency and to the teacher education student where a teacher education student has been identified as being *At Risk of Failing* to achieve the requirements of a professional experience placement.

After the placement the Office for Professional Learning will:

- ensure all documentation is submitted to the University and checked; ie, *Professional Experience Report Form*, *Attendance Register*, *Claim Form/s* and *Tax Declaration/s*;
- process payment to supervisors;
- provide support and guidance to teacher education students who either did not pass their placement or experienced difficulties during the placement.

The Office for Professional Learning does not teach or oversee the development of content knowledge relating to specific curriculum areas of students on placement.

THE PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT – GENERAL INFORMATION

Conflict of Interest

Conflict of Interest on a professional experience placement is any situation where there could be perceived or actual favouritism or over-familiarity towards a teacher education student undertaking professional experience. An example of Conflict of Interest includes members of the supervisory relationship being linked through family/relative status or close friendships at the placement school or centre. This includes a family member working at the school/centre/agency or one's own children attending that school/centre/agency. Such situations may introduce an actual or perceived conflict between personal interests and university duties. UNE's Code of Professional Conduct, including the requirement to declare any such conflicts of interest, binds supervisors as contracted UNE assessors of professional experience units. Where a teacher education student is granted permission to teach at a school/centre/agency where their spouse or children attend, they should not teach, work with or supervise any of these family members under any circumstance.

Please note: All potential Conflicts of Interest MUST be declared before the placement commences and approval is reliant upon discussions between the OPL and the school/centre/agency.

Attendance and Make-Up days

Teacher education students must attend all of the allocated days in order to successfully complete each professional experience placement. They must comply with attendance requirements of their placements in order to meet both degree and accreditation requirements. Completion of *make-up* days will be in negotiation the supervising teacher and inform the OPL of the change.

The make-up day should occur immediately following a placement, **or within two weeks** of the final day of the placement if this is not possible. Waiving of attendance for public holidays for teacher education students is at the discretion of the OPL.

When a teacher education student is absent for three (3) or more days due to illness, a doctor's certificate will be required.

Attendance at any days that are considered mandatory by the supervising teacher or principal/director as part of the professional experience placement will count as days not needing to be *made up*. Examples of days that do not need to be *made up* could include but are not limited to: Professional Development days, athletics/swimming carnivals or cross-country events. **More information regarding sports days and excursions can be found in the section titled *Excursions*.**

Repeated absences from placement, whether they are explained or unexplained, can affect classroom continuity and student learning. A placement may require termination if a teacher education student's lack of attendance affects student outcomes, regardless of reason. For more information please see the section titled *Grounds for Exclusion*.

Medical Certificate

A medical certificate is required when the teacher education student is absent for more than three (3) days during the placement. The teacher education student should note the absence on the *Attendance Register* and submit the medical certificate to the OPL via AskUNE at the end of the placement.

Excursions

Excursions often occur while a student is on professional experience and are excellent opportunities for teacher education students to garner further information about the running of a school/centre/agency. Excursions may include:

- associated sporting events;
- camps;
- short excursions leaving the school/centre/agency grounds while assisting with the supervision of a class/group.

Under the University's Student Personal Accident policy and General and Product Liability insurances teacher education students are covered, provided:

- the professional experience placement is a mandatory requirement of the teacher education student's university course; and
- the excursion is recognised, and undertaken as a component of the teacher education student's university-endorsed professional experience placement.

Excursions must not be any longer than five (5) days in consecutive length and, overall, must not exceed a quarter of a placement. For any days outside this rule, consultation must be sought with the Office for Professional Learning.

Dress Code

Teacher education students are required to be appropriately dressed, befitting a professional career. Individual schools/centres/agencies will have particular requirements with which the teacher education student must comply, for example, covered-in shoes, sun-smart clothing, broad brimmed hats, ties, covered tattoos or removal of some piercings. Teacher education students must honour the requirements of the dress code of the school/centre/agency at which they are completing placement. Should there be no policy for staff dress code at the school/centre/agency, reasonable appropriate dress should be discussed and agreed to by the teacher education student, the supervising teacher and/or the principal/director.

Collaboration

Before Professional Experience

All teacher education students are expected to contact their supervising teacher well in advance of the period of placement. They are encouraged to take every opportunity to meet with and engage in pre-planning prior to the commencement of the professional experience placement. It is recognised this communication may need to occur electronically. A teacher education student who does not collaborate with their supervising teacher in preparation for the teaching experience may not be permitted to complete that professional experience at the discretion of the OPL in consultation with the school/centre/agency.

During Professional Experience

Throughout the professional experience placement, it is expected the teacher education student and the supervising teacher will collaborate over planning, effective teaching, classroom management, etc. and meet weekly for completing the *Weekly Review*, to ensure that the teacher education student is building upon their knowledge of a school/centre/agency. The *Weekly Review* is an effective document for this as it can help identify teaching strengths and areas for improvement. **For more information see the section titled *Assessment*.**

General Requirements for the Teacher Education Student

While on placement, all teacher education students are expected to adhere to the following requirements:

- Participate fully within the life of the school/centre/agency in order to embrace the range of experiences and best practice it has to offer and be open to and appreciative of the professional expertise of staff.
- Work actively in the setting, initially as contributors to the management of the environment, then through working with small groups of children and, where appropriate, in whole-class planning and implementation.
- Contribute to the development of school/centre/agency-based resources and learning environments.
- Professional behaviour, including the use of good manners and common courtesies. If there is a problem, this should be openly addressed with the supervising teacher initially. Any further action should be worked through using correct channels. Sound communication skills are essential for professional growth.
- Arrive at the classroom/school/centre at least 15–30 minutes before school/centre/agency starting times, and remain after finishing times in order to organise resources and to be available for discussion and planning with the supervising teacher.

- Remain with the supervising teacher until final duties are completed. Teacher education students are expected to attend staff meetings and should forward-plan with their work/family commitments in order to meet these requirements for the duration of the placement
- Prepare thoroughly for all aspects of the professional responsibilities. Before and after school/centre/agency times are preparation time. Time should not be taken from interactions with children/students to photocopy or prepare plans/ materials, or to write up observations/ reflections.
- Present planning or documentation to the supervising teacher **prior** to the teaching/planned learning experience or planned interactions with students (the timing of this consultation should be negotiated with the supervising teacher). Supervising teachers will need to sight this documentation in sufficient time to allow changes to be made.

Withdrawal from a Professional Experience Placement by the Teacher Education Student

There are some circumstances that may require a teacher education student to withdraw from the professional experience placement. Applications for withdrawal without penalty must be in writing. Any claim for special consideration must be supported by documentary evidence.

Any teacher education student who withdraws from a placement, irrespective of the reason, **MUST** advise the following, in writing, immediately:

1. Principal of the school or Director of the centre or the Practicum Co-ordinator;
2. Office for Professional Learning;

Please note: A teacher education student who voluntarily withdraws from a placement before its completion will be deemed to have failed the placement. The exception to this is where an application for special consideration is submitted to the Office for Professional Learning and grounds for special consideration have been accepted. In this case, permission will be granted for the teacher education student to repeat the placement. The decision for special consideration will be made in conjunction with the course coordinator as necessary.

This process applies especially to teacher education students who have been identified as *At Risk of Failing* their professional experience placement and who have been given additional support, through the implementation of the *Action Plan* contained within the 'At Risk' *Action Plan*. Should a teacher education student *At Risk of Failing* withdraw from the school/centre/agency before the completion of the placement and, therefore, not meet the requirements of the *Action Plan*, they will be deemed to have failed the placement as incomplete.

Assistance

Supervising Teacher

If at any time a supervising teacher is having difficulties while supervising a teacher education student, they should contact the Office for Professional Learning for support or advice as soon as possible.* Assistance may be required for:

- further clarification of guidelines;
- advice regarding assessing a teacher education student; or
- clarification on when to fail a student.

Contact details for the Office for Professional Learning can be found in the front of this handbook and on our website.

* Supervising teachers are requested not to liaise about student concerns solely with the visiting PELO (Professional Experience Liaison Officer). It is important to directly notify the Office for Professional Learning in the first instance.

Teacher education student

The Office for Professional Learning staff is always willing to provide support and advice. Teacher education students who are experiencing difficulties are encouraged not to 'suffer in silence' but to make use of all personnel who are in a position to help. The following can be approached in the event of difficulties being experienced:

1. Supervising Teacher;
2. Practicum Co-ordinator;
3. School Principal/Centre Director;
4. Office for Professional Learning;
5. Professional Experience Liaison Officer (at the point of visit and concerns will then be reported directly to the Office for Professional Learning).

ASSESSMENT

Assessing the Teacher Education Student

There are two important documents that need to be used in order to accurately evaluate a teacher education student's progress and suitability to teaching. These are:

- weekly completion of the *Weekly Review*; and
- completing the *Professional Experience Report* at the end of the placement.

Assessment criteria

UNE teacher education students are assessed against the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* or the *Early Childhood Qualification Guidelines*. The descriptors contained in these *Standards* or *Guidelines* form the basis for evaluation in the *Professional Experience Report*.

Teacher education students are to be assessed against each descriptor at the level relevant to their progress in their teacher education course, with:

- E: Exceeds expectations;
- D: Developed;
- P: Partially Developed (not present for *Graduate Level Professional Experience Report*); or
- N: Not Developed.

If a descriptor cannot be at least partially demonstrated, please provide an explanation in the appropriate comment section on the report. For the final placement it is expected that teacher education students would be operating at the Graduate Level and demonstrating they are mostly 'Developed' throughout the placement.

Please Note: Graduate Level reports do not include the P – Partially Developed criterion as by this stage of their course, teacher education students should have moved beyond this indicator.

If you require further clarification about the assessment criteria, please do not hesitate to contact the Office for Professional Learning. To help guide your assessment of a teacher education student's demonstration of the descriptors, see the *Evidence Guide* from the Professional Experience Framework document. It indicates the range of evidence you can use when making your assessment of each descriptor. It can be viewed on the website of the Office for Professional Learning: www.une.edu.au/about-une/academic-schools/school-of-education/office-for-professional-learning

Further Information Regarding the Assessment Indicators

Following are more details of the assessment indicators:

Exceeds Expectations for this Stage

When the development of a Standard Descriptor is at a high level for the placement, taking into account the teacher education student's level and knowledge of teaching.

This grading should be marked if the supervising teacher believes the teacher education student is performing well above the expectation of most teacher education students at the particular stage of their course.

Developed

When the development of a Standard Descriptor is acceptable for the placement, taking into account the teacher education student's level and knowledge of teaching.

This grading is for teacher education students who meet the requirements of the placement at a competent or satisfactory level.

Partially Developed

When the development of a Standard Descriptor is of concern for the placement, taking into account the teacher education student's level and knowledge of teaching.

This rating is to be used for any teacher education student where there are concerns but the specific requirements to attain an N grading may not be warranted on the *Professional Experience Report Form*. Any areas that may warrant P – Partially Developed on the *Professional Experience Report Form* may be used to discuss with the teacher education student areas requiring improvement and ways to develop further skills in these areas. Should a supervising teacher have concerns regarding the number of P ratings, they should contact the Office for Professional Learning for further consultation.

For the *Professional Experience Report*, issuing students with predominantly P – Partially Developed may indicate that further consideration should follow as to whether the teacher education student is deemed competent enough to pass the placement, taking into account the level of required teaching knowledge for the placement. If a decision is made that the teacher education student has not met requirements and, therefore, is to be presented with an *Unsatisfactory* result, it is important that due process has been followed up to this point (ie, completing and submitting the relevant documents to the Office for Professional Learning – such as the *Assistance Request Form* and the *Action Plan*).

Not Developed

When the development of a Standard Descriptor is *Unsatisfactory* for the placement at the teacher education student's required level of competence.

This rating means that the teacher education student has definitely not met the required level.

Any concerning areas that may be building to an *N - Not Developed* on the *Professional Experience Report* need to be discussed with the teacher education student to develop ways to ensure they can meet the requirements of the placement before its end. If major concerns are warranted, or feedback is not being implemented, an 'At Risk' *Action Plan* should be completed through a collaboration between the supervising teacher and teacher education student.

For the *Professional Experience Report*, the Office for Professional Learning does not stipulate a particular number of 'N' ratings as automatically failing a teacher education student. However, if a large number of 'N' ratings have been recorded on the report, please carefully consider the final grade, particularly at the level of a graduating placement.

Completing Evaluation for Teacher Education Students

Feedback

Feedback plays an integral part in the development of a teacher education student's teaching practice. Through professional discussion, verbal cues, written notes and formal evaluation, the supervising teacher should provide regular feedback.

For lesson evaluations, the *Lesson Evaluation Sheet* has been provided to assist the supervising teacher with observing, reporting, reflecting and commenting on individual lessons taught by the teacher education student. The supervising teacher may wish to refer to this feedback when composing the *Professional Experience Report*. As required, lesson plans must be written and presented prior to the lesson. The *Lesson Evaluation Sheet* is underpinned by the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*.

In addition to the *Lesson Evaluation Sheet*, supervising teachers are asked to schedule weekly meetings with the teacher education student, using the *Weekly Review Form*, to discuss the progress of the placement and set goals for continued improvement. Formal weekly feedback provides an opportunity to ensure the placement is progressing satisfactorily or to raise concerns with the teacher education student or Office for Professional Learning regarding placement progression.

Evaluation

Please Note: Placements five (5) days in length or shorter do not use all assessment documents mentioned in this handbook. Should there be any issues or concerns regarding a teacher education student placed at your school/centre that need to be addressed further, please contact the Office for Professional Learning immediately for assistance.

The Evaluation for teacher education students as follows:

- *Lesson Evaluation Sheet*
- *Weekly Review*
- *Assistance Request Form*
- 'At Risk' *Action Plan* and *Placement Requires Termination Forms*

The Office for Professional Learning's evaluation for teacher education students has been designed to:

- a. track the progress of the teacher education student throughout their placement;
- b. provide constructive feedback based on the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* or *Early Childhood Qualification Guidelines*;
- c. provide an opportunity for the teacher education student to formally reflect upon their teaching practice and consider ways to improve their skills;
- d. allow discussion around a placement to ensure the teacher education student is progressing satisfactorily;
- e. alert the teacher education student, school/centre and OPL of a teacher education student who is *At Risk of Failing*; and
- f. terminate a placement, if required.

Any areas that cannot be met on a placement or have not been demonstrated by the teacher education student due to lack of opportunity in that educational setting can be left blank and on the *Professional Experience Report Form* a comment explaining the reason for not indicating achievement must be made in the box provided.

Please note: Assessment documents are important in the reporting of a teacher education student's placement. The information about the teacher education student documented in these reports should be used to assist with the completion of the *Professional Experience Report*. The *Assistance Request Form* can be submitted to the OPL at any time throughout the placement should the supervising teacher wish to alert the OPL about concerns surrounding the teacher education student's progress or suitability to teaching.

The Teacher Education Student is Progressing Satisfactorily

If the teacher education student is meeting all requirements of the placement, the following steps are taken:

1. The supervising teacher will complete weekly the *Weekly Review*:
 - a. If throughout the placement the teacher education student is progressing satisfactorily, the supervising teacher is to complete weekly the *Weekly Review* in consultation with the teacher education student.
 - b. The supervising teacher will outline areas of strength and target areas for improvement to enable the teacher education student to achieve a *Satisfactory* result by the end of the placement.
2. Continue using the *Weekly Review* as a feedback tool and for assessment of the teacher education student.
 - a. A copy of this is presented to the teacher education student to aid with improvements to their teaching.
3. Use the *Weekly Review* to assist with writing the *Professional Experience Report* at the completion of the placement.

The Teacher Education Student is At Risk of Failing

If at any time during the placement the teacher education student is not meeting the required outcomes for their level of teacher education, they may be considered *At Risk of Failing*. In this case, the following steps **MUST** be taken by the supervising teacher immediately, in order to support the teacher education student:

1. The supervising teacher requests that another educator in the school/centre provides a second opinion (preferably the principal/director, head teacher, assistant principal or staff member in a supervisory role) by observing and evaluating the teacher education student's performance (this evaluation should be based on the requirements for the teacher education student's level of training).
2. If collective judgement deems the teacher education student to be *At Risk of Failing*, the supervising teacher submits the *Assistance Request Form* to the Office for Professional Learning immediately.

a. The supervising teacher contacts the OPL by emailing the *Assistance Request Form* expressing concerns about the teacher education student's progress.

b. The OPL Team will email the supervising teacher the 'At Risk' Package.

c. A member of the OPL Team will contact the supervising teacher and/or the teacher education student regarding the placement. Immediate communication should occur between the OPL and the relevant members of school/centre staff to decide whether the placement should proceed with the implementation of an *Action Plan* or whether the placement should be terminated.

3. The supervising teacher, with the teacher education student, will complete an 'At Risk' *Action Plan* and submit the document, signed by both parties, to the OPL for record keeping.
4. Supervising teachers will monitor the progress of the 'At Risk' *Action Plan* for re-assessment on the date negotiated.

Supervising teachers are encouraged to contact the OPL at any time to discuss any concerns with a placement.

The decision to recommend the grade of *Unsatisfactory* on the *Professional Experience Report* is the responsibility of the school/centre. The school/centre must ensure, using the steps outlined in this section, that if the supervising teacher deems a teacher education student as *Unsatisfactory*, due process has been followed (as outlined in the 'At Risk' Package). In line with the OPL's Professional Experience Policy, the OPL will have the final decision over the awarding of the grade but would not normally overturn the supervising teacher's judgement unless due process was not followed.

Please note: If due process is not followed, the teacher education student has the right to appeal and, if successful, will be granted a repeat professional experience placement without academic penalty. Teacher education students whose appeals are upheld will always be required to repeat the entire professional experience placement and will not be granted approval to complete only part thereof.

Implementing the 'At Risk' Action Plan

The 'At Risk' Action Plan has been designed to allow a direct discussion around areas of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* that are not being achieved by the teacher education student while on the placement. For any questions, please contact the [Office for Professional Learning](#)

There are five sections of the 'At Risk' Action Plan, as outlined below:

Section A: Identified areas and/or Graduate Descriptors for improvement

Section B: Action Plan

Section C: Teacher Education Student Response/ Plan for Action

Section D: Further Action Plan goals and concerns

Section E: Teacher Education Student Response/ Plan for Action

The following steps are to be followed when establishing the 'At Risk' Action Plan:

1. Supervising teacher completes Section A and Section B of the 'At Risk' Action Plan.
2. A date for implementation is given by the supervising teacher.
3. Teacher education student completes Section C.

EVALUATING THE ACTION PLAN

By the date for evident improvement, the supervising teacher will evaluate the progress of the teacher education student to meet the goals of the Action Plan. There are three criteria to this evaluation:

- The Action Plan has been adequately addressed.
- The Action Plan has been adequately addressed but further areas for concern have been identified.
- There has been insufficient improvement and so the placement requires termination.

The Action Plan has been adequately addressed

The negotiated goals in the Action Plan have been met and the placement can be further assessed by following the Handbook documentation and the *Weekly Review*.

The supervising teacher will recommence and continue the placement to completion and submit the 'At Risk' Action Plan documents to the OPL for record keeping.

The Action Plan has been adequately addressed yet further areas for concern have been identified

Further goals will be required to achieve a *Satisfactory* grading for the placement. This may mean a placement requires extension; negotiation with the Office for Professional Learning and the teacher education student will need to occur.

1. The supervising teacher will contact the OPL to discuss further action.
2. If agreed that further improvement can be made with a *Further Action Plan*, the supervising teacher will complete Section D.
3. The supervising teacher will set a date for improvement to be evident.
4. The teacher education student will complete Section E.

There has been insufficient improvement and so the placement requires termination

If the teacher education student is unable to achieve the goals negotiated in the Action Plan (part of the 'At Risk' Action Plan), the supervising teacher will be required to terminate the placement.

1. The supervising teacher notifies the OPL at the earliest sign that the teacher education student will not meet the required targets of the Action Plan.
2. The supervising teacher notifies the teacher education student that progress has not been made on the Action Plan or it is unlikely the candidate will meet the requirements for the relevant level of teacher education.

3. The supervising teacher completes and submits the *Placement Requires Termination Form* to the OPL.
4. The teacher education student will receive official confirmation from the OPL stating that placement has been terminated and remediation must occur.

The supervising teacher should not feel obliged to pass the teacher education student if all goals in the *Action Plan* have been achieved but they are still not meeting the overall requirements for the professional experience unit.

The Professional Experience Placement Requires Termination

A teacher education student's placement will be terminated if they breach any of the rules stated in the Grounds for Exclusion section of this handbook. A termination should not be based on personal bias but on a situation where the wellbeing of others in the school/centre and/or education of the students is seriously compromised due to conduct of the teacher education student (or if every means taken to assist the teacher education student to achieve a *Satisfactory* result has not been successful). If situations such as these arise, the following steps must be taken:

1. The supervising teacher should first consult with the school principal/centre director and then alert the Office for Professional Learning as soon as a decision has been made to terminate the placement.
 - a. The supervising teacher submits the *Placement Requires Termination* document to the OPL.
2. *Grounds for Termination* box should be marked and *Reasons for Terminating the Placement* section completed.
 - a. The teacher education student is notified by the OPL that the placement will be terminated and the reasons should be stated clearly as to why this has occurred;
3. The teacher education student must return any borrowed resources or documents to the front office and leave the school/centre immediately.

Please note: If a teacher education student's practicum is terminated, and the *Placement Requires Termination Form* has been sent to the OPL, the *Professional Experience Report* does not require completion. However, it will need to be stated on the *Placement Requires Termination*, in the section provided, why the placement was terminated.

In the event that a teacher education student's placement is discontinued at the request of the supervising teacher or principal/director, the teacher education student **MUST** leave the school/centre immediately and must **NOT** make further contact with the school/centre/supervising teacher or anyone else relating to the placement, including school/centre students. The teacher education student will be contacted by the OPL and an interview will be scheduled (face-to-face or by telephone) for further support and clarification about the termination.

COMPLETING THE PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE REPORT FORM

The *Professional Experience Report* is the document that teacher education students will present to prospective employers and requires assessment against the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* or the *Early Childhood Qualification Guidelines*.

It is important to complete each section in this report, not only with an appropriate grade but by also providing written evidence/examples in the relevant section of how the descriptor has been demonstrated by the teacher education student.

1. The supervising teacher must complete the *Professional Experience Report* and present the teacher education student with either a *Satisfactory* or *Unsatisfactory* result on the final day. A copy of the *Professional Experience Report*, whether *Satisfactory* or *Unsatisfactory*, must be submitted to the OPL by the supervising teacher and the original should be given to the teacher education student on the final day of the placement.
2. If the grade is *Unsatisfactory*, the teacher education student will be contacted by the OPL team to arrange appropriate support.

PLEASE NOTE: *Professional Experience Reports* are considered professional reference documents and should be presented in a professional manner.

Reports regarding a teacher education student's progress while on professional experience are recommendations made to the University of New England regarding their progress as assessed against the relevant standards. The final decision and application of grades regarding the assessment of the teacher education student lies with the University as per the UNE Assessment Rule. It is important that clear documentation is maintained with students *At Risk of Failing* to ensure clear and specific communication, including completion of the *Action Plan* and honest appraisal of a teacher education student's ability is maintained.

Satisfactory Result

A teacher education student will receive a *Satisfactory* result upon meeting the criteria applicable to their level of teacher education. The *Professional Experience Report* should reflect the ongoing use and assessment in the grading of their teaching against the Standards and comments regarding their suitability to teaching. If, throughout the placement, the teacher education student has been receiving sound results or has shown suitable improvement by listening to critical feedback, the teacher education student should be deemed *Satisfactory* and pass the placement.

Unsatisfactory Result

A supervising teacher who records the result on the Professional Experience Report as 'Unsatisfactory' will have followed due process by previously indicating to the teacher education student, through the use of the relevant assessment documentation and implementation of an *Action Plan*, that issues or concerns had arisen and required attention.

An Unsatisfactory Result on the Professional Experience Report should not come as a surprise to a teacher education student but instead be the final evaluation from the supervising teacher when, after support and following the correct process of completing the 'At Risk' *Action Plan*, the teacher education student has been unable to fulfil the requirements of the *professional experience unit*. Supervising teachers or principals are asked to promptly liaise with the Office for Professional Learning when the teacher education student has been assessed as 'Unsatisfactory' so support for the teacher education student can be arranged. Teacher education students who for whatever reason fail a professional experience placement **must** complete an additional support program, at the discretion of the OPL, prior to repeating a placement

Please note: The University acknowledges that the process of assessing a teacher education student At Risk of Failing is demanding and potentially stressful. The University sees support of supervising teachers and principals/directors as a priority so contact with the OPL is an important part of this support.

GROUNDS FOR EXCLUSION

In some instances the principal/director and/or the University may require a teacher education student to leave the school/centre/agency and discontinue the professional experience placement. This situation can occur even if the teacher education student has not been identified as *At Risk of Failing* under the normal provisions for professional experience.

Teacher education students may be excluded from a school/centre/agency and thus fail the professional experience placement for any of the following reasons:

- inability to reasonably cooperate with staff and work effectively in the school/centre/agency environment;
- demonstrated attitudes and actions antithetical to the profession of teaching;
- absence from the professional experience placement without satisfactory explanation, approved leave or the necessary documentation or continual explained absences which hinder the learning of the classroom students and the learning outcomes of the teacher education student;
- deficiencies in their knowledge and understanding of their subject disciplines, the NSW or Australian Curriculum and/or planning for learning;
- an inability to meet the requirements of one or more of the Fundamental Skills Assessment;
- breaches of University regulations, policies and/or procedures or code of conduct for students;
- deficiencies in their communication skills;
- breaches of departmental/system/school/centre/agency/university regulations or the law.

Teacher education students who have been excluded from a school/centre/agency, and thus failed, or had the professional experience placement terminated, may be precluded from pursuing opportunities for further professional experience or entry to schools/centres/agencies. If a teacher education student demonstrates serious deficiencies or misbehaviour in one or more of the above during a school/centre/agency placement, they may be liable for further action under the *Show Cause* provisions of the University. This policy may also apply when a student has failed a professional experience more than once.

The School of Education reserves the right not to place a teacher education student in a school/centre/agency or other professional experience setting in any instance where the performance, personal conduct or professional conduct of the teacher education student does not meet the required standard, regardless of whether the teacher education student is enrolled in a professional experience unit or component.

Teachers and principals/directors are accountable to parents and school/centre/agency systems to provide quality learning opportunities and outcomes for their students and need to be confident that any teacher education students placed in their schools/centres/agencies can support and maintain teaching programs and standards.

EXTENSION OF PLACEMENT

In some cases, where the supervising teacher does not believe they have had sufficient opportunity to gauge the teacher education student's development and cannot, therefore, assess the teacher education student as meeting the placement requirements, the supervising teacher may negotiate with the Office for Professional Learning and teacher education student an Extension of Placement.

An example is if a teacher education student is only starting to undertake the required teaching load in the fourth week of a 20-day placement because of school camps, NAPLAN, school musicals, etc, or if the teacher education student will not meet the requirements in 20 days but has the potential to achieve a Satisfactory outcome with further teaching. In this case an Extension of Placement may be granted. This situation includes a student who may have been noted as *At Risk of Failing* yet has shown improvement in their teaching as per the requirements of the *Action Plan* and requires further experience to meet these goals.

A request for an Extension of Placement must be made with reasonable notice to the teacher education student and the Office for Professional Learning. All parties must be aware of a potential need to extend a placement in advance of the final day of the placement and the teacher education student must be aware of the reasoning behind the extension request.

A teacher education student who withdraws from a placement before completing an Extension of Placement (after having agreed to complete extra days) which has been granted will be deemed to have failed the placement as incomplete.

SUPPORTING VISITS FROM UNE

Role of Professional Experience Liaison Officers

The School of Education, in accordance with the 'Professional Experience Framework', employs external liaison officers to visit teacher education students during their professional experience placement. Professional Experience Liaison Officers (PELOs) are experienced educators who undertake the responsibilities of university liaison during professional experience placements. When feasible, a PELO or a School of Education lecturer will visit a teacher education student during their placement in order to:

- observe;
- support;
- provide quality feedback;
- evaluate;
- make professional judgements;
- liaise with the supervising teacher;
- advise schools/centres/agencies about using the Progress Guides to identify if a teacher education student is *At Risk of Failing*; and
- advise the Office for Professional Learning about any issues that may have been identified regarding a teacher education student's placement.

The PELOs are adept at assessing how teacher education students conduct themselves in the classroom and surrounding environment. Through conference with the supervising teacher and the teacher education student, a PELO gauges how the teacher education student:

- maximises their professional experience through effective planning, communication and organisation;
- commits to the ethos of the school/centre/agency;
- builds meaningful and appropriate rapport with staff, students and the school/centre/agency community;
- imparts their skills and knowledge relating to specific contexts and curriculum content;
- makes use of or creates resources in order to inspire students to learn;
- identifies and targets various learning styles or needs and calls upon suitable pedagogy;
- accepts constructive advice and criticism from a supervising teacher and strives to improve.

PELOs are assigned their visits by the Office for Professional Learning. Visits are scheduled for all placements at the discretion of the OPL and not based on requests from teacher education students. If geographical constraints prevent a visit from being scheduled, however, a phone call will replace this process.

Please note: UNE representatives, after consultation with the supervising teacher and after viewing relevant documentation regarding a teacher education student's placement, can assist with assessing a teacher education student but are not responsible for making the final decision about whether or not the teacher education student should pass the professional experience placement. They can, however, support the teacher education student and supervising teachers through an At Risk of Failing process should it be requested.

LEGAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Privacy Laws

Students who are on professional experience must not post any information or pictures regarding their school/centre/agency (including but not limited to: class, supervising teacher, staff, principal/director or other professional experience students) on Social Media.

All teacher education students who are enrolled at UNE must adhere to the Australian Privacy laws and all relevant UNE policies.

Insurance

Accident Insurance

The following information is provided to assist teacher education students should there be any accident while undertaking professional experience placements.

Under its insurance program the University of New England maintains a Student Personal Accident Policy. This policy provides cover for accidental injury for students engaged in activities directly related to an approved course which includes practical and/or community placement, fieldwork and all other associated activities relevant to the approved course which are authorised by the University. This policy may provide cover for accidental injury for students engaged in activities that are authorised by the University. The cover for accidental injury is subject to strict policy conditions, and various exclusions apply.

Accidents/Incidents occurring whilst in pursuance of the approved course should be reported by the teacher education student, in writing, within 48 hours to both the Office for Professional Learning (peo@une.edu.au) and UNE Insurance (insurance@une.edu.au).

Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)

Each setting in which a teacher education student is undertaking placement is expected to observe appropriate Workplace Health and Safety regulations. Teacher education students have the responsibility to ensure they have the intellectual, physical, psychological and social competence to successfully complete the professional experience placement. Teacher education students should only apply for a professional experience placement if they are confident they are capable of completing it successfully.

Teacher education students should ensure they are familiar with the expectations of the setting in terms of lifting, exposure to infection, posture and positioning for computer use and/or other repetitive tasks in a school/centre/agency or setting. Teacher education students should observe correct hygiene and safety practices to protect themselves, and the staff and students with whom they are working. Teacher education students who are, or may become, pregnant before or during their professional experience placement

should consult their doctor before commencing a placement regarding potential health risks and inform the Professional Experience Office and the school or centre of their pregnancy. Most placement settings have their own policies regarding staff who are pregnant and teacher education students are required to abide by those policies. Teacher education students should contact the Office for Professional Learning with any specific queries in relation to their pregnancy and professional experience.

To safeguard teacher education students in case of an accident, they must provide personal details including any health management plans, eg, asthma, diabetes, etc, and next-of-kin details.

Teacher education students are expected to adhere to all WHS policies and laws of the school/centre/agency at which they are undertaking professional experience.

Glossary

ACECQA

The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority.

Action Plan

The Action Plan is contained within the Progress Guides. It should be used as a working document to create goals for the teacher education student to improve their teaching practice.

At Risk

When the teacher education student is not meeting requirements at their level of teacher training.

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

The assessment framework agreed to by the national accrediting bodies to assess teachers at all stages of their careers. These standards are used for any pre-service teacher working in a school setting.

Child

A person enrolled in and attending a school/centre/agency in which a teacher education student is undertaking a professional experience placement.

Early Childhood Qualification Guidelines

Guidelines developed for teacher education students undertaking professional experience placements in an early childhood centre.

Graduate Professional Experience Report

A report completed by the supervising teacher at the completion of the final placement in conjunction with the Specific Professional Experience Requirements.

Office for Professional Learning (OPL)

The Office for Professional Learning has administrative responsibility for all educationally based professional experience placements. It is located in the School of Education, University of New England.

PELO

See Professional Experience Liaison Officer.

Placement

Abbreviated wording of professional experience placement.

Practicum or Placement

See Professional Experience.

Professional Experience

'On the job' preparation for teaching undertaken by a teacher education student in a school or centre or agency. Professional experience allows teacher education students to make essential links between theory and practice.

Professional Experience Liaison Officer

An experienced educator employed by the University of New England to visit teacher education students during their Professional Experience placement. They will visit a teacher education student in order to observe, support, provide quality feedback, evaluate, make professional judgements, and liaise with the supervising teacher.

Professional Experience Report

A report completed by the supervising teacher at the completion of the placement in conjunction with the Specific Requirements for Professional Experience.

Progress Guides

Support documentation that allows for continual assessment of the Teacher Education Student throughout the placement. The Progress Guides are broken into smaller components as follows:

- Lesson Evaluation Sheet
- Weekly Review Form
- Assistance Request Form
- At Risk Action Plan Form
- Placement Requires Termination Form
- The Progress Guide — At Risk Action Plan can be submitted to the OPL at any time throughout the placement when issues are identified for the Teacher Education Student.

Student

A person enrolled at and attending a school/centre/agency in which a teacher education student is undertaking a professional experience placement.

Supervising Teacher

An educator working in a school/centre/agency who has been contracted by the University of New England to supervise a teacher education student during a placement.

Teacher education student

A student who is enrolled in and studying a teacher education course at the University of New England.

