

School of Science and Technology

Practicum in Exercise and Sport and Practicum with Clinical Populations



Practicum Supervisors' Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Supervisor,

We understand your time is valuable and we appreciate your commitment to mentoring our students and to assisting UNE in providing placement experiences that create competent and work-ready exercise professionals.

The ESSA accreditation program allows each accredited university's placement program to dictate how industry relevant skills and placement opportunities are interwoven throughout the degree, how placements are managed and the processes related to student and site assessment. This document has been compiled to provide placement supervisors with an understanding of the requirements of these capstone placement units (EXSC322 and EXSC390) within the UNE coursework program. This includes the process of guiding the student through placement and the role of the Clinical Placement Educator within the UNE Clinical Placement Office.

In addition to the UNE requirements, UNE upholds and promotes the ESSA Professional Standards for Exercise Scientists and Exercise Physiologists and aligns its practices with the ESSA Practicum Standards. It is important each supervisor is familiar with these documents also.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Clinical Placement Office with any questions or concerns at any point during the placement. The UNE [Practicum Supervisor Portal](#) contains information that will be helpful to you throughout this experience and this page includes how to gain access to the UNE library.

I hope you enjoy your role and we look forward to working with you.

Regards



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ABOUT UNE

The UNE Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science and the Bachelor of Clinical Exercise Physiology are delivered both on-campus and online. There are therefore two main differences supervisors must be aware of in the delivery of the UNE placement program compared to the majority of placement programs across the country.

Firstly, online course delivery means UNE students can study from anywhere around the world. The geographical spread of students varies year on year and a significant number of students live and study in rural and remote areas where access to appropriate placement sites is limited. The Clinical Placement Office therefore may request a significantly different number of places at each site each year and students may have to travel significant distances to attend appropriate placement sites. Your understanding and assistance is appreciated.

Secondly, students are required to submit assessment items online while on placement. UNE student grades are determined by their performance in unit assessment items graded by the Clinical Placement Educator. Unit assessment items are designed to reflect the students' competency at graduation. This includes video submissions which replace physical practical examinations but still allow the assessment of a student's inter-personal and time management skills by the Clinical Placement Educator. Your assistance in facilitating this within your site is appreciated. The feedback from placement supervisors is important as it provides the university with assurance the students' performance in a workplace environment is in keeping with professional expectations. All students are required to reach a competent standard in key skills to pass the unit. The Clinical Placement Educator will work closely with the supervisor if at any time a student has difficulty meeting the required competencies.

OVERARCHING AIMS OF PLACEMENT

The Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science and the Bachelor of Clinical Exercise Physiology at UNE are accredited through ESSA. Graduates of ESSA accredited courses aligned to meet the professional standards for Exercise Scientists and Exercise Physiologists should be able to appropriately assess clients to design safe and effective exercise interventions. This includes health and wellness interventions to affect behavioural change and increase exercise and functional capacity across diverse contexts and settings.

The Clinical Placement Office partners with appropriate sites and supervisors to continue to develop students in the following areas:

1. Understand and apply the principles of responsible, evidence based practice, with respect for and in accordance with ESSA's:
 - [Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice](#),
 - [Professional Standards](#) and;
 - [Scope of Practice](#)
2. Consistently demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills in their interactions with clients, peers, colleagues, other health professionals and external stakeholders.
3. Appropriately apply specialist knowledge and evidence-based practice to accurately and efficiently collect and interpret subjective and objective assessment data.
4. Continue to develop and apply specialist knowledge and evidence-based practice to prescribe and deliver safe and effective health, exercise and sports performance interventions for individuals of varying social and/or cultural backgrounds.

5. Demonstrate a sound understanding of lifestyle modification and behavioural change strategies to facilitate behavioural change in the prescription and delivery of their exercise interventions and to continue to develop these skills.
6. Demonstrate a sound understanding of the risks associated with exercise assessment, prescription and delivery when working with healthy populations and for clinical populations, and develop and implement strategies to minimise risk.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE SUPERVISOR

It is a UNE requirement that all **supervisors have two years industry experience** prior to taking on the role of supervisor. In circumstances where this is not achievable, for example geographical isolation, oversight supervision is required. The oversight supervisor must be able to demonstrate expertise in the required field and hold the qualifications as required by the ESSA Practicum Standards. In most circumstances the UNE Clinical Placement Educator is able to perform this role. All oversight supervision requirements must be raised with the UNE Clinical Placement Office as early as possible in the site evaluation process. The oversight supervision must be coordinated by the Clinical Placement Office and where oversight supervision is required, evidence of documented communication and information sharing between the oversight supervisor, primary supervisor and the student is required.

UNE RECOGNITION OF PLACEMENT SUPERVISION

Currently ESSA credits 1 CPD point for every forty (40) hours of student supervision. At the completion of supervision a letter of confirmation regarding the number of hours of supervision completed will be provided.

Each supervisor is encouraged to discuss their particular needs with the Clinical Placement Educator. In addition, each year a supervisor engages with the UNE placement program they are permitted, upon application, to have **access to the UNE library** for a period of 12 months. To gain access, please navigate to the [Practicum Supervisor's Portal](#) and follow the instructions under "Library Access"

THE CLINICAL PLACEMENT OFFICE

Student placements within the Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science and Bachelor of Clinical Exercise Physiology are coordinated through the UNE Clinical Placement Office.

Communication between the Clinical Placement Office and placement supervisors will predominantly occur via telephone and email correspondence. A Clinical Placement Office team member, or an academic member of staff, will visit placement sites as required when students are on placement.

The Clinical Placement Office can be contacted via email at exerciseprac@une.edu.au or for further information see the [Practicum Supervisor's Portal](#).

LEGAL AGREEMENT AND INSURANCE

Placement sites are required to complete a Clinical Placement (Legal) Agreement. This is the legal agreement between the university and the legal entity connected to the placement site and these documents remain valid for 3-5 years. Placement cannot commence without a valid Clinical Placement (Legal) Agreement in place. The Clinical Placement Office will provide a copy of this Agreement on receipt of the completed Placement Site Application Form.

UNE covers full public risk and professional indemnity insurance in relation to acts and omissions of students undertaken as part of their university program. A UNE Clinical Placement (Legal) Agreement must be signed by representatives of both UNE and the placement site prior to the commencement of any placement activity associated with the site. UNE will effect and maintain these insurance policies throughout each placement:

- public liability and professional indemnity cover of \$10 million for students and the UNE Placement Supervisor/s;
- personal accident insurance cover for students not covered by workers' compensation insurance; and
- workers' compensation insurance as required by law.

Note: UNE's insurance does not cover illness suffered while on placement. This is particularly pertinent to the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNE will, on request, provide the placement site with copies of the Certificates of Currency for the insurance policies referred to within the Clinical Placement (Legal) Agreement. Please contact the Clinical Placement Office if you require further information or a copy of the UNE insurance certificates.

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The UNE [Site Information Survey](#) is used by the Clinical Placement Office to ensure that your site and supervisors align with meeting ESSA requirements.

As a placement supervisor you will be available to supervise and guide your assigned student/s throughout the practicum. The ESSA and UNE maximum ratio is 5 students per 1 supervisor. A student should not be completing any hours without the oversight of the clinical supervisor.

Please also be aware that students cannot count paid work towards their practicum hours, nor can they be paid for their practicum.

The supervisor should actively involve the student in the day to day activities of the workplace as much as possible; that is, more than as an observer.

Placement supervisors should ensure that students are aware of the professional, safety, legal and ethical aspects of your work and the responsibilities entailed in dealing with patients or clients. Supervisors are also expected to:

- Provide learning opportunities and resources that will assist the students' learning goals
- Assist the student with identifying learning needs, scope and objectives for the placement
- Observe and provide feedback to the student with respect to placement matters
- Undertake the completion of an interview with the Clinical Placement Educator and the student at the midway point (if placement exceeds 4 weeks' duration), and completion of, the student's placement.
- Confirm hours completed via the students logbook and ESSA Student Record of Engagement
- Notify the Clinical Placement Office when students perform poorly or significant problems eventuate regarding placement.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES THROUGHOUT PLACEMENT

During the placement, students are expected to work in a professional manner and uphold the standards required. They are also ambassadors for UNE and a guest in your facility. As such, they must be aware of and display an appropriate professional appearance, attitude and conduct during each placement.

Students are required to comply with the University's [Code of Conduct Rule](#). It is also an expectation that all supervisors and students are aware of and follow [ESSA's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice](#).

UNE Students are required to:

- Ensure they have completed all mandatory placement hours within the ascribed period (Trimester 2, July to September)
- Ensure confidentiality of information with respect to client and placement facility records
- Maintain a logbook of all placement hours which is sighted and signed by their supervisor weekly.
- Complete a Record of Student Engagement indicating total number of hours completed and activities undertaken for each placement site which is sighted and signed by their supervisor on completion of their hours
- Complete all tasks set by their supervisor including required reading and familiarisation tasks set out by the placement facility prior to commencing placement.
- Inform the placement supervisor if the student feels that adequate guidance and/or opportunities for development are not being provided or they are unable to follow the placement supervisor's instructions
- Notify the placement supervisor if they expect to be late to the placement site throughout the placement. If the student is consistently late without justification, the placement supervisor should notify the Clinical Placement Office as soon as possible
- Notify the placement supervisor if they are unwell during the placement. In the case of illness that extends over a period of time, the student is to notify the Clinical Placement Office as soon as possible. The Clinical Placement Office will work with the placement supervisor to identify if there is scope to make up for the missed hours/days
- Actively demonstrate a willingness to assist and learn and to be receptive to professional advice while undertaking placement
- Maintain open communication with the placement supervisor and Clinical Placement Office with respect to placement expectations and outcomes
- Seek information and feedback from the placement supervisor to assist with learning
- Ensure the placement supervisor completes the Supervisor Feedback Form at the midway and final point of each placement

SUPERVISOR FEEDBACK FORM: ASSESSMENT OF KEY COMPETENCIES

Key competencies have been introduced to reflect ESSA's move toward outcomes based placement assessment. Accompanying the key competencies is a list of specific skills UNE students are required to demonstrate while on placement. These are skills students have previously been assessed on and assessment of these skills while on placement should be informal. That is, students are expected to fluidly integrate these skills into their clinical practice and be able to answer any questions you have regarding the usefulness and application of these skills. These changes are reflected in the Supervisor Feedback Form that is completed at the mid-point and end of placement for each site:

- [EXSC322 Supervisor Feedback Form \(Addressed to meet AES practicum requirements\)](#)
- [EXSC390 Supervisor Feedback Form \(Addressed to meet AEP practicum requirements\)](#)

The feedback provided will be discussed during the interviews that will be conducted between the Clinical Placement Educator and Supervisor but will also serve as a starting point to discuss the student's progress and if remedial/further learning activities are required to help the student progress towards demonstrating competency.

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING GRIEVANCES AND CONFLICT ON PLACEMENT

Where a concern is identified, the placement supervisor must first take reasonable steps to discuss the matter with the student. Where the matter is not able to be resolved on site, the Clinical Placement Office must be notified.

Where the grievance is not of a litigious nature, the Clinical Placement Educator implements a course of action to resolve the issue. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Disciplinary action for students
- Implementing remedial learning activities for students
- Monitoring of students' activities via increased phone consultation
- Monitoring of supervisors' activities via increased phone consultation
- Provision of additional support for the supervisor to enhance mentoring skills
- Moderating a meeting between the parties
- A practicum site visit
- Termination of the practicum placement

Where the Clinical Placement Educator) is not able to resolve the matter, notice is given to the Course Coordinator for resolution.

Examples of problems that may arise include:

- Lateness, or extended absence by the student or supervisor
- Irresponsible or unprofessional behaviour by the student or supervisor
- Poor student or supervisor engagement
- The inability for the supervisor and student to communicate effectively
- Threatening or harassing behaviour on behalf of the student or supervisor
- A student failing to adhere to placement site business protocols

STUDENT WELFARE

The welfare of students is UNE's responsibility. If UNE cancels a Placement, UNE will advise the placement site Coordinator as soon as possible. UNE acknowledges, that the placement site may direct a student about appropriate client care. If the placement site is not satisfied that a student is competent to perform an allotted task, or that a student does not, or cannot, conduct their working practice in a safe and professional manner, then the placement site may, acting reasonably, do any or all of these things:

- restrict access by that student to clients;
- direct that student to leave the placement site's premises; or
- take any other steps the placement site considers reasonable to ensure the student complies with a direction given under clause 7.4 of the UNE Clinical Placement (Legal) Agreement.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

During placements all students are obliged to practice under the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2000 to facilitate and uphold health and safety. Students are expected to:

- Work safely at all times within the work environment
- Cooperate and follow reasonable instructions
- Wear, use and care for protective equipment where provided
- Not wilfully endanger the safety of themselves or others

Injuries and Accidents

If a student is injured during their placement they must follow the procedures set by the Health Facility in which they are located. They must also report the injury immediately to the Clinical Placement Office. If an injury is received, students should complete an incident report. Any incident report completed during the placement should be copied and provided to the Clinical Placement Office. The student is responsible for uploading the document into InPlace and the Clinical Placement Office will ensure that a report is uploaded to the UNE Work Health and Safety site.

Working while on Placement

Due to professional and ethical responsibility, students are to be well prepared for placement, and have an obligation to be well rested prior to their placement. Being employed full or part time during the placement period does not allow students to meet this obligation, as there are work health and safety implications associated with this practice.

Students who work full or part time hours whilst attending placement are placing themselves at risk under work health and safety legislation and may also be at high risk in the event of any litigation from adverse outcomes. Students are expected to discuss any external work/family commitments that may affect their ability to engage in their placement with the Clinical Placement Office and their placement supervisor.

Supervisors should ensure that the student is appropriately briefed on all health and safety and emergency procedures of the work site at the commencement of placement. Such procedures may include: evacuation and emergency procedures such as medical emergency, fire, physical safety and security; reporting of hazards, incidents and accidents; infection and disease control procedures; workplace bullying and harassment policy and procedures.

It is also the responsibility of the placement supervisor to ensure an appropriate and compassionate as well as a safe placement environment for the student at all times, keeping in mind that this may be the student's first placement experience.