

# Bachelor of Laws

Student Placement Guide



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## PLACEMENTS IN THE COLLEGE

Industry requires graduates who have not only the technical skills but the practical skills to contribute effectively to the workplace. An industry placement partner can play a vital role in developing the workforce of the future by being part of the education experience.

Placements are a strategy designed to develop and integrate employability skills into programs of study by increasing the interaction of industry and students through real life experiences. The placement program meets the needs of industry, students and universities in developing, delivering and reflecting upon learning experiences that benefit all stakeholders.

As a JCU student of law, the placement program gives you the opportunity to participate in practical and real-life learning activities that introduce students to the practice of law or other law related careers.

It is a great opportunity to gain valuable skills, establish professional relationships and develop a realistic view of the legal system in practice.

## LEGAL PLACEMENTS

The Legal Placement subject enables eligible final year law students to undertake unpaid work experience for academic credit as part of their final year program. Students who enrol in this subject must complete a minimum number of work experience days in a relevant approved workplace. Students must be supervised by a legal professional who holds a current practising certificate, or other approved qualification. Enrolling in placement subjects does incur a fee, the same as any other subject enrolled in for academic credit.

The subject incorporates best practice capstone design principles that provide a culminating experience in which students are able to integrate, apply, critique and extend the knowledge they have acquired over the course of their undergraduate study. Capstone experiences promote closure to university course studies and assist students in successful transition to the workplace.

## DEFINITIONS IN THIS MANUAL

### Industry partner organisation

A partner organisation enters into either a Student Placement OR Overarching Agreement with the university to provide placement opportunities for JCU students.

### Placement supervisor

A Placement Supervisor is the person within the partner organisation who takes responsibility for supervising the JCU student while on placement. Placement supervisors are required to hold a relevant degree, or have significant industry experience, a current professional certification or other qualification considered suitable by the subject coordinator.

### Subject coordinator/subject lecturer

The WIL in Law Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the coordination of placements of students with partner organisations and liaising between students and placement supervisors.

### Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Placement Coordinator

The WIL Placement Coordinator coordinates placement of students with partner organisations and liaises between students and placement supervisors. All communications are to go through the WIL Placement Coordinator at: [dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au](mailto:dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au)

## Supervision

Supervision is:

*...an intervention that is provided by a senior member of a profession to a junior member or members of that profession. This relationship is evaluative, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the junior member(s), monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients she, he or they see(s), and serves as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession. (Bernard, J.M. & Goodyear, R.K. (1992) Fundamentals of Clinical Supervision).*

## Student

Student refers to a JCU student currently enrolled in the College of Business, Law and Governance.

## Office of Director of Public Prosecutions

Placements at the Office of Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) are offered for four weeks during Study Periods 6 and 10. Places are restricted and interviews for placements (for both study periods) are undertaken by the ODPP. Positions are highly competitive. If you wish to undertake a placement at the ODPP, you will need to monitor your emails from [mandy.brock@jcu.edu.au](mailto:mandy.brock@jcu.edu.au) in order to complete the Expression of Interest. EOI's will be sent out with details of the formal application process in March/April. Students should not contact the ODPP directly but complete the formal application as required.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Prior to commencing their placement, students are required to sign and return the Confidentiality Agreement (Attachment A) to the WIL Placement Coordinator: [dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au](mailto:dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au) within the first week of commencing their placement.

## SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

### Police checks

Some placements (such as with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions) require police checks. You will be notified of the procedure should this be required.

### Other requirements

Depending on the partner organisation and the type of placement, students may also be required to meet additional criteria to be accepted for placement, such as:

- A working with children check - student Blue Card application forms can be downloaded from the Queensland Government [Blue Card Services](#) website
- A current driver's licence
- Additional training
- Indemnity insurance (see below for information regarding JCU work experience/ placement insurance)

## STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

JCU is committed to developing the independence of people with a disability in the wider community through full and equitable participation in higher education. Students are strongly advised to register with JCU [AccessAbility Services](#) if they consider their disability/illness/condition will impact upon their ability to carry out the duties required during their placement.



## **PREPARING FOR PLACEMENT**

### **Mandatory introductory session**

In the first week of the study period in which the placement is to commence, the subject coordinator will hold an introductory session with commencing students. The session will consist of a face-to-face seminar. During the seminar, subject requirements will be further explained, including assessment requirements. Where attendance is not possible, students must make alternative arrangements with the subject coordinator.

## **HOURS AND TASKS FOR PLACEMENTS**

### **Hours**

Students are expected to undertake a minimum of 12 days of placement during the operating hours of the partner organisation, including evening and weekend hours, if they are the organisation norm. This issue should be discussed fully during the pre-placement process and deemed acceptable to the student before entering into the placement agreement.

### **Absences**

If students must be absent from placement, they need to notify their placement supervisor as soon as possible and ensure that they make arrangements to cover work scheduled for the day(s). Where an absence occurs, arrangements should also be made with the placement supervisor to make up the lost time or to extend the placement completion date (if possible within the study period).

### **Placement presence**

The student is expected to be in attendance at the placement location for the full number of negotiated weekly hours.

Students are to advise the subject coordinator of any changes made to key dates that arise during the placement.

## **DURING THE PLACEMENT**

### **Student's presentation and conduct**

The student is expected to become as much a member of the partner organisation as is reasonably possible. It is anticipated that the student will be extended the same privileges and responsibilities granted to new professional recruits. In return, the student is expected to approach the placement in a manner deemed appropriate for the setting as regards to dress, punctuality, workload, organisational responsibilities and so forth.

### **Confidentiality and privacy**

Students must inform themselves about and adhere to principles of confidentiality contained in the relevant Codes of Ethics, standards and policies and practices in the partner organisation. This is to ensure ethical work with clients or customers, appropriate relations with colleagues and other partner organisations and to avoid any possible legal action under professional liability. Additionally, any serious breach of confidentiality may result in a fail grade in the subject. Students should note that confidentiality also applies to social media. Students must not Facebook, tweet or blog about their placement experiences in any way; including references to the partner organisation and/or placement supervisor.

The privacy of individuals and personal information is protected by government legislation and breaches of privacy can carry legal penalties. Please refer to the following federal and state privacy legislation:

- [Privacy Act 1988](#) (federal Privacy Act)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009](#) (Queensland)

Any information regarding clients must be regarded as confidential information and students are not permitted to take client notes home. When presenting information for assessment or training purposes, client information should be de-identified.

### **Interim Report**

It is a requirement of the placement that the student meets with the workplace supervisor midway through the placement to review the placement plan, discuss progress, obtain feedback, determine future tasks and goals if necessary, and that learning objectives are on the way to being met. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that an Interim Report (see sample Attachment B) meeting date and time is set to discuss their progress with their workplace supervisor. Amendments and additions can be made to the original placement plan if required, to more accurately reflect the workplace experience.

A PDF version of the report is to be downloaded from the LearnJCU subject site and emailed to student's workplace supervisor. Once filled out, student is to upload to LearnJCU.

### **Final Appraisal Report**

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the Final Appraisal Report (see sample Attachment C) is completed by the supervisor at the end of the placement.

A PDF version of the report is to be downloaded from the LearnJCU subject site and emailed to student's workplace supervisor. Once filled out, student is to upload to LearnJCU.

### **Freedom of Information (FOI)**

As a public authority established by an Act of the Queensland Parliament, James Cook University is subject to the [Right to Information Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)

This Act imposes obligations with respect to public access to general information, access by individuals to information held about them, and opportunities for individuals to ensure that information held about them is accurate. This has implications for students and their supervisors. Students need to be aware that individuals they work with may have access to their files and to what students write in them.

### **Travel and related expenses**

Travel and other expenses related to getting to and from placement remain solely the student's responsibility. Travel and expenses incurred in the course of undertaking placement activities should be addressed in accordance with the partner organisation's policies and procedures for professional staff. In the absence of any formal policy, the student should negotiate anticipated costs, payment and/or reimbursement with the placement supervisor prior to commitment to any expense. It is assumed the student will not suffer any major personal financial hardship in undertaking a placement.

### **Insurance**

Students are covered by the university's insurance policies (including professional indemnity, public liability and personal accident insurance) during placements, if working in an unpaid capacity, provided that pre-requisite conditions are met.

The pre-requisites for the insurance include:

- The student concerned is enrolled at the university in an approved course of study and subject.
- Fees associated with the subject/placement have been paid to the university either in full or in line with an approved payment scheme.
- The placement is recognised as a course related activity thereby bringing the activity under Public Liability in-service coverage.
- The Confidentiality Agreement (Attachment A) has been completed and signed by the student prior to commencing the placement.
- The student, if working with children, is in possession of a suitability card; or has taken the prescribed steps toward obtaining a suitability card (Blue Card) by completion of the relevant application for a Working with Children check and lodgement with the Commission for Children and Young People.

None of the policies however, cover damage to placement organisational vehicles driven by students on placements. Students' personal cars are not covered by the university's insurance policies. The university discourages students from using their own vehicle while undertaking placement duties. If a student uses his/her personal vehicle to undertake any duties associated with the placement this is done at his/her own risk, unless they successfully negotiate with the placement provider for his/her vehicle to be noted on the placement provider's insurance policy.

Students placed interstate or overseas by the university are covered under the university corporate travel insurance policy for the duration of their placement. Further information regarding Student Insurance, including Certificates of Currency, may be located at [Student Insurance Information](#).

## WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG DURING PLACEMENT?

### Personal safety

It is a reality that depending on the type of placement involved, some of the people with whom students come into contact are experiencing extreme emotions and circumstances which may be expressed at times as anger, verbal abuse, threats of physical harm, etc. At all times students need to be able to make rapid assessments of risk to themselves and others, and take appropriate evasive, diffusing, conciliatory or protective action.

It may be useful for students to canvass other workers' experience of such incidents, their methods of ensuring safety, and to consider their own responses to such potential experiences. Some partner organisations may have procedure manuals which cover such circumstances, or students can talk to the Occupational Health and Safety Officer, or Security Officer in their partner organisation.

However whether on placement or not, everyone needs to be aware of potential risks in their immediate environment, and seek possible risk reduction options.

To comply with the WHS Policy, all staff (including casuals) and students are required to use the RiskWare reporting software to communicate any work-related incidents, injuries or hazardous situations. If an accident or injury occurs, please follow the instructions on the following link: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/work-health-and-safety/report-and-manage-an-accident-incident-or-hazard/what-is-riskware>

### Discrimination and harassment

Attitudes concerning sex, race and age vary within the general community and the partner organisations that offer student placements. There are now legal definitions that should guide the behaviour of individuals and groups.

Under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld), students can complain if they are treated unfavourably because of their sex, marital status, parental status, pregnancy, breastfeeding,

race, age, impairment, religion, political belief or activity, trade union activity, lawful sexual activity, or association with a person who has any of the above-mentioned attributes. You can make a complaint if the discrimination occurs in one of several areas, including education.

It may be that students become exposed to discrimination or harassment. Students who are affected by this should immediately discuss the particular details with their placement supervisor and their subject coordinator. If the student feels uncomfortable raising the matter with partner organisation staff, he or she should contact the subject coordinator directly.

For further information see:

[James Cook University Discrimination webpage](#)

and

[The Queensland Human Rights Commission](#)

## **Personal difficulties**

Students on placement are in a situation where they must learn to balance work pressures and demands, academic responsibilities and personal life. Students who are having personal difficulties that are impacting on their placement should consider whether they feel comfortable having a discussion with their placement supervisor or their subject coordinator about the situation, to see what might be able to be done to support the student to complete the placement.

If the student feels uncomfortable raising the matter with partner organisation staff, he or she should contact the subject coordinator directly.

Free and confidential support is also available for students through the [JCU Counselling Service](#)

## **Interpersonal difficulties/conflict**

On occasions, interpersonal difficulties arise on placement, as is the case in many work situations. Such an event should not be ignored but dealt with in an appropriate manner. Frequently, this is best accomplished through discussion with the person concerned. If this is either not possible or the difficulties continue, the matter should be raised with the placement supervisor and/or subject coordinator.

Students are required to contact the subject coordinator when they believe the future of their placement is in doubt.

## **Supervision relationship issues**

The most productive learning experiences for students occur when there is a strong working relationship between the placement supervisor and student on placement. It is expected that students will initially discuss any differences they may have directly with their placement supervisor. In any situation where differences between placement supervisor and student remain unsettled after discussion, it is expected that either or both parties will promptly inform the subject coordinator. Every breakdown in relationship will be managed on a case-by-case basis with due regard to the concerns of supervisor and student.

Where an irreparable rift in the supervision relationship occurs during the placement the subject coordinator should be notified and discussions will take place between all involved to determine whether or not the student's placement can continue, and if so, under what conditions. In some circumstances the student's placement will be terminated (see further below).

## **Placement at risk**

Despite everyone's best intentions, difficulties can arise during placement. The most frequent appear to be:



1. *Leave of absence of Placement Supervisor.* Where this occurs or is to occur for an extended period the subject coordinator should be contacted and the implications discussed. It may be possible for students to be provided with a different supervisor within the same partner organisation or relocated for the remainder of their placement time if this is thought appropriate.
2. *Change of partner organisation circumstances.* This covers a variety of circumstances but essentially where the student's learning program could be at risk, the subject coordinator should be contacted and the implications discussed. It may be possible for students to be relocated for the remainder of their placement time if this is thought appropriate.
3. *Difficulties in supervision.* When these arise and cannot be resolved by the individuals concerned, it is important that, at the earliest signs of difficulty, the subject coordinator should be made aware of them. Open discussion of the situation, before individual positions become entrenched, frequently leads to resolution.
4. *Difficulties with performance.* It is important to reiterate that the early and close involvement of the subject coordinator is essential if problems are identified with the student's performance.

## Termination of placement

Students are required to contact the subject coordinator when they believe the future of their placement is in doubt. A student must not terminate a placement without first notifying the subject coordinator that they have concerns about the placement.

**If a student terminates a placement before consulting with the subject coordinator, either a withdrawal without penalty (if appropriate) or a failing grade may be awarded.**

If the student and placement supervisor discuss any concerns and agree that the placement cannot continue, suitable arrangements must be made to terminate that placement and to complete any outstanding work. The placement supervisor and student will each be requested to submit a report of the learning opportunities experienced, the learning derived from them to date, the difficulties identified, and an appraisal of the student's performance.

An alternative placement *may* be organised if, in the assessment of the subject coordinator, the student has shown the potential to meet a satisfactory standard by the end of the placement period. The subject coordinator reserves the right not to permit the student to undertake an alternative placement.

The subject coordinator reserves the right to:

1. Terminate a placement and assign a failing grade; or
2. Support a withdrawal without penalty on the basis of a medical certificate or statutory declaration prior to the scheduled completion of placement; or
3. Support a withdrawal without penalty if, after consultation with the student, the placement supervisor and the other relevant university staff, it is determined that the quality of the student's performance to date is not in the interests of individuals, groups, and/or the partner organisation.

Note also the JCU policy, "[Review of a Student's Suitability to Continue a Course Involving Placement](#)".

## ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT

Detailed information concerning assessment of students involved in placements is available on the relevant LearnJCU subject website.

## **OBTAINING REFERENCES**

Often students wish to obtain references from previous or current industry partner organisations and/or supervisors. Students should first check with the placement supervisor to ensure that he/she is able and prepared to provide a reference. The placement supervisor should be given sufficient time to respond adequately.

## **STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students are required to work within the parameters of this placement guide and the placement conditions.

## **CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you need to contact or have any enquiries, please email [dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au](mailto:dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au)



## Confidentiality Agreement

Student Name

Student Number

- I acknowledge that whilst I am undertaking the placement as part of my course I will have access to confidential and personal information about clients of the placement organisation.
- As a student enrolled at James Cook University I understand the obligation of confidentiality of information concerning the personal affairs of clients.
- I will not at any time disclose any Confidential Information or Personal Information relating to a client of a placement organisation that I become aware of unless the disclosure of the information:
  - (a) is necessary to enable an employee of the placement organisation or I to perform our duties; or
  - (b) is for the purpose of obtaining legal advice from a registered legal practitioner; or
  - (c) is required pursuant to an order of a Court, Commission or Tribunal; or
  - (d) is in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) or the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld).
- I will not disclose any private or commercial information (eg. relating to other staff or the placement organisation) that I become aware of (regardless of how obtained) during the placement.
- I will not to remove from the premises of a placement organisation, any written or hardcopy documents/files or any electronic files, which belong to the placement organisation, and which may contain Confidential Information or Personal Information relating to a client of the placement organisation or the operation of the placement organisation.
- I will not to make any record(s) (other than on documents or files which belong to the placement organisation), during or after completion of my placement, which may identify any clients of the placement organisation. I further undertake not to remove from the premises of the placement organisation any written or hardcopy documents/files or any electronic files which I have prepared during my placement and which may identify a client of the placement organisation. I acknowledge that in order to ensure a client is not identifiable; I must not record any of the following details where the recording of one or more of the details would enable the client to be identified:
  - (a) the name of the client;
  - (b) initials of the client's name;
  - (c) the client's date of birth;
  - (d) any names of the client's relatives;
  - (e) the name or details of the placement organisation; or
  - (f) the names or details of any of the placement organisation's staff.
- I will not to publish on social media (including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media website) any photographs, details or information of any kind, which I have gained or observed during a placement. I also undertake not to discuss any details or information gained or observed during a placement which may identify a client of the placement organisation, at any JCU lecture or tutorial, JCU event or whilst engaging in any educational activity at any place.

'**Confidential Information**' includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) information which by its very nature might be reasonably understood to be confidential or to have been disclosed in confidence;
- (b) information which a placement facility indicates is confidential;
- (c) information which relates to any arrangements or transactions between a placement organisation and its clients;
- (d) information which would be of a commercial value to a competitor of a placement organisation; or
- (e) all records based on or incorporating information referred to in clauses (a) to (d).

'**Personal Information**' is information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:

- (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and
- (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

Signed

Date



### SUPERVISOR INTERIM REPORT

Student Name

Name of Workplace

Name of Supervisor

SAMPLE

#### **Attendance at Workplace**

[This section should record whether the student has attended at the times and dates as required. Where the student has attended late or failed to notify of absences, this should be noted and appropriate guidance given as to the requirements for attendance and punctuality.]

#### **Progressive Achievement of Learning Outcomes**

[This section should record whether the student is on the way to acquiring the learning outcomes as outlined in the placement plan. Areas that may require further work or greater emphasis should be identified and any amendments or additions to learning outcomes identified.]

#### **General Further Feedback**

[This section should include any further general feedback the supervisor may wish to provide.]

Signed

Date

### SUPERVISOR FINAL REPORT

Student Name

Name of Workplace

Name of Supervisor

SAMPLE

#### **Satisfactory Completion of Workplace**

[This section should record whether the student has attended at the times and dates as required and satisfactorily completed the 12 days equivalent fulltime work experience as required by the subject.]

#### **Achievement of Learning Outcomes**

[This section should record whether the student has acquired the learning outcomes as outlined in the placement plan. In particular areas that were identified in the Interim Report as requiring further emphasis and / or improvement should be addressed to determine if improvement has occurred.]

#### **General Further Feedback**

[This section should include any further general feedback the supervisor may wish to provide.]

#### **Testimonial (Optional)**

[Please complete this section if you would like to provide us with a testimonial which may be used for advertising purposes.]

Signed

Date



## ATTACHMENT D

### PLACEMENT PLAN

#### GENERAL INFORMATION – PLACEMENT DATES

Student Name  Student Number

Host Organisation

Dates I will be attending placement

Date for mid-placement review

Date for final review

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

[Develop learning outcomes based on the type of work you will undertake and how you will challenge yourself to learn more during the placement. The following are examples only: *To understand how a legal office is run using verbal and written communication skills. Undertake legal research in relation to real client matters and provide advice. Apply professional standards and legal ethics within a legal setting. Conduct simple client interviews. Draft simple client letter of advice. Instruct in a simple court matter. Organise and prioritise work given within a legal environment.*]

At the end of my placement I will be able to

## ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN AND LINK TO LEARNING OUTCOMES

[Provide a list of the types of activities to be undertaken during the placement and how these link to the learning outcomes. The examples below are brief. You should have at least six activities you can list.]

Activities	Link to Learning Outcomes
<p>1. Assist in the front office.</p> <p>2. Undertake legal research on a client matter and draft a legal letter or document.</p> <p>3. To sit in on client interviews identifying the legal issues using legal problem solving and adhering to professional standards and legal ethics.</p>	<p><i>This activity is linked to learning outcome 1 as I will be using verbal and written communication skills within an office setting by speaking with clients. It is also directly linked to learning outcome 6 to organise and prioritise work given.</i></p> <p><i>This activity is linked to learning outcomes 2 and 5 to further my skills in legal research and drafting. To learn how a client file is to be conducted and worked on.</i></p> <p><i>This activity is linked to learning outcomes 3 and 4 as I will be given the opportunity to experience the client interviewing process, how to deal with a client and what questions are asked to understand the legal problem.</i></p>

Signed by Workplace Supervisor

Full Name

Date

Signed by Student

Full Name

Date