

# Bachelor of Laws

Supervisor Placement Guide



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## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for agreeing to supervise a JCU law student whilst undertaking a placement. This subject allows students to gain valuable experience in a legal workplace while undertaking reflective and academic assessment. It is envisaged that during the placement students will learn ethical and professional responsibility and improve their legal skills to assist in the transition from university to the workplace.

As an industry partner you are playing a vital role in developing the workforce of the future by being a part of the education experience. Placements are designed to develop and integrate employability skills into programs of study by increasing the interaction of industry and students through placement experiences to develop and deliver learning experiences that benefit all stakeholders.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVE OF PLACEMENTS

The aim of this subject is to enable students to apply knowledge and skills developed through their degree in a practical workplace setting. The benefits of placements to partner organisations include: access to students with current, relevant knowledge and developing skills; opportunity to improve learning outcomes for graduates and the opportunity to share ideas and resources with JCU College staff and students.

The role of the workplace supervisor in this program is to provide guidance; allocate appropriate tasks; supervise and provide interim and final feedback to the student. The workplace supervisor is responsible for appraising the student's performance, which requires a formal report.

This guide sets out the obligations of all stakeholders. You should not hesitate to contact the JCU subject lecturer at any time before or during the placement if you have any queries.

## PLACEMENT PROCESS

### Partner organisations

Prior to each offering of the placement subject, partner organisations are contacted by JCU to determine whether the organisation is in a position to offer a placement for the relevant study period. Students submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Placement Coordinator liaises with industry partners to secure placements.

Students also have the option of self-sourcing placements, particularly if they are seeking industry experience in a particular firm or field. If a student has approached you regarding an offer of placement and you would like more information please do not hesitate to contact the subject lecturer or email [dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au](mailto:dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au).

### Students

Student EOI's are reviewed to determine eligibility. WIL Placement Coordinator organises for host to meet with student. Host confirms acceptance of student. Partner organisations are under no obligation to take on a student if they consider applicants unsuitable.

To ensure the placement provides a valuable learning experience, students will also complete a SWOT analysis which they will provide to the supervisor at the commencement of the placement. In completing the analysis, students will be required to reflect upon their existing legal knowledge, skills and experience to guide the development of their placement plan (further details below). For example, the student may never have experienced work in a

professional workplace and their analysis may reflect their need, among other things, to gain an understanding of how legal offices operate. On the other hand the student may already be working within the profession in an administrative position and may be seeking to gain experience in the conduct of client matters. The student will evaluate their existing research, problem solving and analytical, written and oral communication skills and consider where and how their skills may be improved. During the placement students will also be required to complete a number of other assessment tasks.

## Student Placement Plan

At the commencement of the placement, students will be required to complete a placement plan (see Attachment D) that has been negotiated with the supervising lawyer. The placement plan **must** be completed by the student within the first week of the placement as it is an assessable item and must be approved by the subject lecturer to ensure that the placement complies with the subject requirements.

The placement plan must include:

- The commencement date of the placement and the times and dates the student will attend the legal workplace to complete the equivalent of 12 days' work experience. It is acknowledged that there may be some flexibility in the times and dates however it is preferable that the 12 days are spread across the semester time frame as much as possible. This will allow greater opportunity for student reflection.
- The dates for the interim and final feedback reports and any other supervisor meetings that may be held during the placement.
- The learning outcomes of the placement. Based on the SWOT analysis, the student and the supervisor will be required to negotiate the learning objectives or outcomes that can realistically be met during the placement. As learning outcomes are commonly referred to in subjects throughout the law degree, students will be familiar with the concept and how they apply. For example learning outcomes may include: understanding of basic operations of legal workplace and time management; the ability to draft legal letters or legal documents; an understanding of how to communicate effectively with clients and obtain instructions; appreciation of the relationship between different legal players such as practitioner, client and court; an appreciation of the differing roles of a solicitor and barrister and how barristers are briefed and instructed. Students should include a minimum of six learning outcomes.
- An activities plan that will include how the learning objectives will be achieved. The supervisor and student should negotiate the type of work the student will undertake. While it is recognised that work activities may change during the placement due to workplace demands, the activities should as closely as possible be designed to achieve the negotiated learning outcomes. In the placement plan students will be required to demonstrate how particular activities link to the learning objectives. For example in order to meet a learning objective that includes an understanding of how to communicate effectively with clients and obtain instructions, the activities plan may state that during the placement the student will observe a number of client interviews and if appropriate conduct a simple interview under supervision to obtain instructions.

## Setting tasks

In order to provide a valuable learning experience, tasks should be allocated to achieve the agreed learning outcomes set in the placement plan. A variety of tasks will provide a greater overall experience for the student.

Set goals for the students at a professional level and make it clear what is expected with each task. It may be necessary to start with simpler tasks and increase the complexity and expectations as the student gains experience and confidence. You may wish to assign an overall project that can be worked on during downtime in the workplace. While there is an expectation that students will complete some menial or administrative tasks during the placement, please make sure there is a balance between such tasks and professional tasks to ensure the objectives are met.

**Where possible, provide constructive feedback to the student and encourage them to reflect on the task undertaken; where could they improve, what did they learn when undertaking the task, what skills did they employ in solving the problem or undertaking the task?**

## Orientation and induction to the workplace

To ensure both the workplace supervisor and the student gain the most from the placement, partner organisations are required to ensure the student is inducted into the workplace. As the student may not have worked in an office setting before, they may be unfamiliar with basic office procedures and unsure of when and how to ask for assistance. Meeting other staff and being aware of their roles will assist in the transition. Explicit instructions and expectations from the start of the placement will help to minimise mistakes and ensure that the student's contribution to the workplace is worthwhile. As a mentor to the student, the student will look to you as a role model and will be guided by your professional conduct. Set realistic timelines and demonstrate how you manage your time and workload effectively.

As with any other new staff member it is important that the student is aware of the Work, Health and Safety Policy for your organisation and associated key persons responsible for Work, Health and Safety. This should also include making the student aware of workplace policies, such as those related to equity, discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying.

The partner organisation needs to provide students with workplace and job specific training equivalent to that provided to any paid employee in the same position as the student. The partner should ensure that students are competent and able to work safely before students begin their placement.

If a student reports an incident or near miss or if there is a safety breach by your organisation related to the placement, then you will be required, if requested, to provide a copy of any report, recording or investigation to the subject lecturer of the outcome of any incident or investigation.

## Provision of workspace and equipment

Please ensure the student has access to a suitable workspace for the duration of the placement, together with the necessary tools and equipment for the student to undertake their duties. A computer, with access to appropriate data, software and an email address should be considered.

## Work placement insurance

JCU insurance only applies to approved, non-paid work placements. Supervising workplaces electing to pay the student during the placement will be responsible for arranging the necessary insurance cover for the student.



JCU's insurance will cover the student for personal accident, public liability, professional indemnity, corporate travel and medical malpractice while they are on an unpaid and approved JCU work placements. A letter annexed (Attachment A) shows the currency of this insurance cover.

Note that JCU's insurance policies DO NOT provide cover for vehicles in the event of an accident. If students on placement are required to drive the organisation's vehicle the organisation should ensure that they have the appropriate motor vehicle insurance cover.

## **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 and as such, be accepted as an entry-level peer or trainee among experienced colleagues. It is anticipated that the student will be extended the same privileges and responsibilities granted to new employees. 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**

Prior to commencing the placement, students will be advised by the subject lecturer of issues relating to confidentiality, privacy and conflicts of interest. It is important however that the partner organisation also advises students of these issues and that all existing resources, documentation, material and information that they may utilise while on placement remains the property of the organisation, and should not be removed or copied without prior approval from their supervisor.

### **Student assessment tasks**

The student will receive a grade for the placement subject ranging from a High Distinction to a Fail and will be determined from a number of assessment tasks completed by the student during the placement period. The assessment tasks will include:

- Preparation and submission of the placement plan.
- Preparation, submission and presentation of professional BLOG entry. The students are required to prepare a professional BLOG entry on a topical legal issue similar to the type of article found in a professional legal journal/magazine such as Proctor or Precedent information or Blog posts, typically found on legal organisations or law firm websites. Students choose their own topic after discussion with their supervisor. It is envisaged that the information may be of use to the partner organisation.
- Final seminar presentation. Students must attend a final seminar where they complete an oral presentation on an aspect of their learning journal or professional BLOG entry.
- Supervisor appraisal report is due week 13 of the semester. The partner supervisor is required to complete an appraisal of the student's performance while on placement. The appraisal addresses the following:
  - Satisfactory completion of placement
  - Achievement of learning outcomes
  - Workplace performance and output

## Interim Report – workplace supervisor

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 and determine future tasks and goals if necessary. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that a meeting date and time is set to discuss their progress with their industry partner supervisor. This should occur at approximately the midway point of their placement. The purpose of the interim report (see Attachment B) is to ensure that feedback has been provided to the student and that learning objectives are on the way to being met. Amendments and additions can be made to the original placement plan if required, to more accurately reflect the workplace experience.

## Final Report – workplace supervisor

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the final report (see Attachment C) is completed by the supervisor at the end of the placement. The report does not require the supervisor to grade the student, however satisfactory completion of the placement is required in order for a student to pass the subject. Any additional feedback will provide the student with a valuable tool to assist in their career development.

If at any time you would like to discuss the progress of your intern, please don't hesitate to contact the subject lecturer.

## UNSATISFACTORY STUDENT PERFORMANCE

If the partner organisation is not satisfied with the performance of the student they should endeavour to resolve the problem directly with the student in the first instance. If the issue is unable to be resolved, then the matter should be raised directly with the WIL Placement Coordinator through an email detailing the complaint as soon as practicable. We will attempt to resolve the issue to the benefit of all parties. However if the situation does not improve and the relationship breaks down and becomes irreconcilable then the student may be referred to counselling and/or withdrawn from the workplace.

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Students are advised that all existing resources and documentation including client files, material and information that they may utilise while on placement remains the property of the organisation and should not be removed or copied without prior approval from their partner organisation supervisor.

The Student Placement OR Overarching Agreement between JCU and your organisation provides that each student shall own the intellectual property in any material created by the student during placement which forms part of their assessment or reporting obligations for their studies at JCU (eg. placement plans, reflective journals).

Your organisation should consider whether it is necessary to negotiate an agreement with students relating to ownership of intellectual property rights in any other material created by the student during a placement.

## CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any enquiries or need to contact the College, please email [dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au](mailto:dtesplacements@jcu.edu.au) or phone the WIL Placement Coordinator on (07) 4.

# ATTACHMENT A



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Insurance Office  
Legal & Assurance  
Office of the Chief of Staff

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T (INT'L) +61 7 4781 4882  
E [insurance@jcu.edu.au](mailto:insurance@jcu.edu.au)

JCU Townsville  
Bebegu Yumba campus Douglas  
Townsville QLD 4811 Australia

CRICOS Provider Code 00117J

## Student Insurance Cover | 1 November 2021 to 1 November 2022

To Whom It May Concern

James Cook University (JCU) has the following classes of insurance in place to cover students in the normal course of the University's business, including unpaid work placements, unpaid work experience, field trips and research activities.

- Public Liability covers the legal liability to pay compensation in respect of third party injury or property damage, caused as a result of an occurrence, and happening in connection with University business. This cover does not extend to the use of and/or incidents involving motor vehicles.
- Professional Indemnity covers the University for claims arising out of a breach of professional duty by reason of any negligent act, error or omission committed or alleged to have been committed by the student whilst acting solely in the conduct of Professional Services on behalf of the University (geographical limit is worldwide, excluding USA & Canada).
- Student Personal Accident Insurance covers enrolled students for accidental bodily injury whilst on authorised University business. The cover provides benefits for death, disability, hospitalisation, some loss of wages and non-Medicare medical expenses.
- Corporate Travel Insurance covers students when undertaking authorised business travel on behalf of the University, for a period of up to twelve (12) months.
- Medical Malpractice Insurance (for medical, nursing and allied health students) covers legal liability to others for personal injury arising as a result of actual and/or alleged medical negligence of students acting on behalf of the University, provided the students are suitably supervised by an appropriately qualified person, it is a mandatory course requirement, and the patient consents to treatment (geographical limit is worldwide, excluding USA & Canada).

This summary has been prepared for general reference only. Nothing contained herein prevails over the terms, conditions and exclusions of the Policy.

Any incident that requires the attention of the University's insurers should be notified directly to the JCU Insurance Office on 07 4781 4882 or [insurance@jcu.edu.au](mailto:insurance@jcu.edu.au).

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kama Weier'.

Kama Weier  
Insurance Officer

Calms  
Singapore  
Townsville



## ATTACHMENT B

### 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

## ATTACHMENT C

### 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