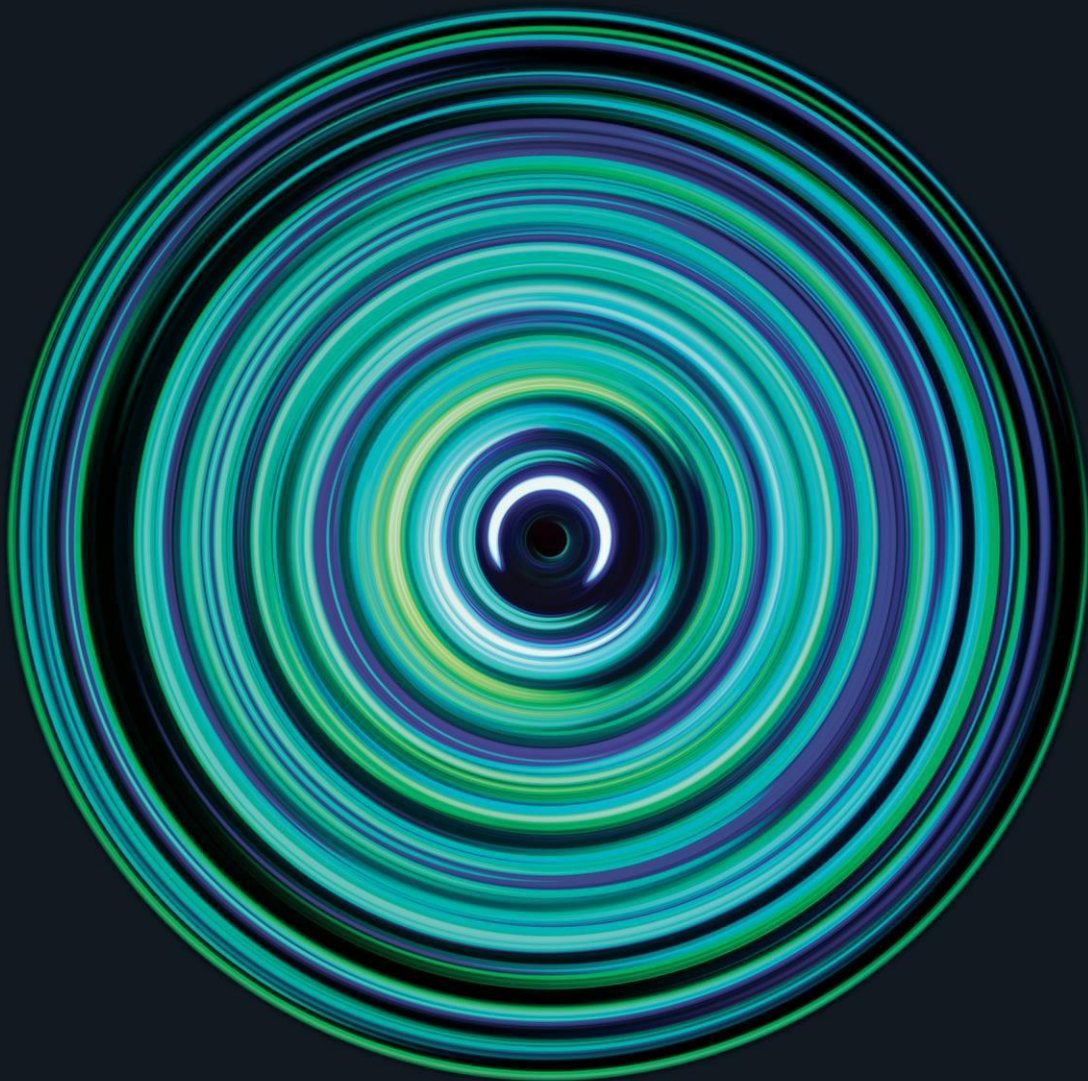


# Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy

COU6424 Field Placement  
Manual 2022



Manual Version dated September 2021

(Students must refer to the most recent versions)

Professional Placement website: [www.ecu.edu.au/sah-professional-placement](http://www.ecu.edu.au/sah-professional-placement)



Edith Cowan University (ECU) is committed to reconciliation and recognizes and respects the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities, cultures, and histories. ECU acknowledges and respects the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the traditional custodians of the land. ECU acknowledges and respects its continuing association with Nyoongar people, the traditional custodians of the land upon which its campuses stand.

Welcome to Field Placement at Edith Cowan University (ECU), as a Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy student. I am excited for the learning and growth you will undergo over the time of your Field Placement experience.

We have put together this manual with information and guidelines about the requirements of your Field Placement, Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia

(PACFA) accreditation and the assessment process for the units. You must familiarise yourself with this information before working with communities and professionals while on Field Placement.



This Field Placement is designed for you to develop your skills as a worker in the sector, whilst providing a valuable benefit to the agencies who will host you and the communities they serve.

ECU is constantly striving for improvement in the student experience and the experiences of community members, so please send us feedback on this booklet and your Field Placement experience.

I wish you well for this Field Placement and your future career.

*Dr Vicki Banham*

Dr Vicki Banham  
Associate Dean

(Social Work, Social Science, Counselling, Youth Work)  
School of Arts and Humanities

Edith Cowan University

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## Field Placement Contacts

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## Course Information

The course includes theoretical study, experiential-based skill development and self-reflective clinical practice in the fields of counselling and psychotherapy. Students are prepared to work within the frame of individual therapies, Families & couples work and group psychotherapy. The aim is for students to develop their experience in both in-depth and more intensive short-term modalities. Clinical emphasis on the person of the therapist in relationship with the world of the client/s is a key part of all the units. This course is psychologically and culturally relevant to populations across the lifespan and encompasses classical and modern understandings of contemporary mental health issues, with the goal of aiding in early interventions and symptom relief. In the final year of study, students can hone their clinical skills in a year-long fieldwork placement, or as an alternative to the fieldwork placement, students with relevant previous clinical experience may apply to complete a research project.

## Graduate Attributes

Ability to communicate	Clarity of written and spoken expression, including in public fora, and through the appropriate use of technology.
Ability to work in teams	Collaborating and contributing effectively in diverse settings.
Critical appraisal skills	Planning, organising, problem-solving and decision making.
Ability to generate ideas	Having the courage and confidence to be creative and innovative.
Cross-cultural and international outlook	Engaging productively and harmoniously with diverse cultures.

## PACFA Education and Accreditation Standards

The Edith Cowan University Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy Program is accredited by the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia. Students should refer to the Ethical Standards set by this body: <http://www.pacfa.org.au/practitioner-resources/ethical-standards/> <https://www.pacfa.org.au/>

For the full course structure, please refer to the [ECU Online Handbook](#)



## Introduction to Field Placement

Field Placement provides an opportunity for students to receive supervised practice in an agency setting.

The aim is for students to develop their experience in both in-depth and more intensive short-term modalities. Clinical emphasis on the person of the therapist in relationship with the world of the client/s is a key part of all the units. This course is psychologically and culturally relevant to populations across the lifespan and encompasses classical and modern understandings of contemporary mental health issues, with the goal of aiding in early interventions and symptom relief. Students on placement will be conducting counselling sessions, participating in a team, receiving supervision for work and participating in following agency policy and procedures. In keeping with the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) stipulations, students need to have practised necessary skills/competencies in the classroom to a satisfactory level before going out into the field. Additionally, students will need to have passed all prerequisites and be deemed placement ready by the university panel led by the placement coordinator.

Students will spend a minimum of one to two days per week in an agency setting and will carry a client load allocated by the agency. This unit has a compulsory attendance requirement with a minimum of 80% attendance is required. Placement will commence in Semester 1 during the second/final year of the course.

## Placement Hours, Attendance and Timing

Field Placement occurs during both Semester 1 and 2 in the second year of the program. COU6424 occurs in the first semester while COU6425 is scheduled for semester 2.

Overall, students are required to complete 280 hours in the field across both units. 280 hours in the field include orientation to agency, induction regarding agency policies and procedures, agency professional development and training, observation/sitting in on a range of therapy sessions and group sessions, role-play sessions, case conferences, writing up case notes, phone contact and client follow up, administration, planning and research, liaison with other professionals, agency project presentations and agency-specific tasks. Crucially, students must complete a minimum of 40 hours of face-to-face counselling or psychotherapy practice (client contact) with 10 hours of supervision (related to client contact).

Out of 280 required field hours, COU6424 requires a minimum of 120 hours which include a minimum of 15 hours of client contact and 5 hours of supervision. According to the 2020 PACFA Training Standards:

### Client

The term client is used in the context of the PACFA Professional Training Standards to refer to either client or patient. A client may be an individual, a couple, a family, or a group in the context of psychotherapy and /counselling provision.

### Client Contact

Client contact, for the purposes of PACFA's Professional Training Standards, involves a range of experiences of the trainee working directly with clients (as defined above) where if possible and appropriate there are no dual relationships between the client and trainee. Client contact hours, first and foremost, comprise face-to-face, in the same room or place, contact with the client. This may include up to 50% of the first 40 client contact hours being co-therapy where a student is providing group therapy. After the initial 40 face-to-face client hours, other methods of client contact such as telephone counselling, online counselling using web technology such as Skype, or additional co-therapy are allowable. The following items are not part of client contact hours for the purposes of the Training Standards: Case presentation, supervision, reflective teams, note taking, role plays, practice sessions and client observation. These components are regarded as preparation for client work within the training context.

## Co-therapy

Co-therapy involves a trainee working with a trainer or qualified practitioner or another trainee in a dual capacity to provide psychotherapy or counselling at the same time with the same client or client group. For the purposes of the Training Standards, co-therapy only counts towards the required 40 client contact hours when provided by trainees and not when it is also provided by a trainer or qualified practitioner.

Additionally, to note that Client Contact requirements may be impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and where applicable and notified by PACFA, the requirements may shift.

## Attendance

Students must be prepared to undertake a minimum of one-two day a week (as required by the agency) on placement. In instances, where a student undertakes two days a week in an agency setting, they may commence their placement late (at least by the second week of April) and conclude by or after October but not before that.

Once a placement is confirmed for a student, their start and projected completion dates must be recorded on their assignment 1 for COU6424 (See Assessment section and COU6424 BB site for further details).

Generally, students will complete both Field Placement 1 and Field Placement 2 in the same agency to ensure continuity and depth of practice. However, this will vary for students who have passed COU6424 and for the following reasons are unable to proceed to COU6425 in the same year:

- not fulfilled the prerequisites to proceed to COU6425 in the same year
- the student has 'exceptional circumstances' which prevents them to proceed and complete COU6425 in the same year. In such a case the student must provide valid evidence to make a case for 'exceptional circumstance'.

In the case where students are unable to continue COU6425 in the same year for the above-stated reasons, unless there is an established agreement between the university and agency and an offer from the agency to permit the student on placement in the following year for COU6425, students will need to follow the COU6425 processes which are stated separately on the COU6425 handbook and manual.

## Leave

Students are expected to meet professional standards of punctuality, dependability, and responsibility. If more than 3 days are missed due to illness and students do not meet the required placement hours, they will be required to make up the lost time. Any leave dates need to be negotiated between the student and the agency at the beginning of a placement. Students must inform their Placement coordinator about their leave dates in writing.

Additionally, students must attend the COU6424 orientation seminar and COU6424 mid-semester review seminar.

## ECU Student Expectations

Students must adhere to the following ECU Student Charter, rules, policies, and conducts:

- ECU Student Charter <https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/my-studies/rules-and-policies/student-charter>
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Work integrity learning Policy
- Work-integrated Guidelines for students
- [https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/873408/WIL-Guidelines-for-Students.pdf](https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/873408/WIL-Guidelines-for-Students.pdf)

In addition, ECU expects students to:

- adhere to relevant professional codes of ethics and demonstrate a high standard of honesty, integrity and social responsibility;
- conduct in a manner that reflects well on the University and represent the ECU values and mission;
- recognise their roles as a representative of the University, School and of their course;

- meet with or communicate with their ECU Placement coordinator as required and provide required documentation;
- ensure they do not post comments which relate to any aspect of their placement experience on social media;
- ensure they are fit for placement and will not cause harm to themselves or others by undertaking a work placement experience.

## Prerequisites

### COU6424 Field Placement 1

Students must pass all the first-year units and COU6428 which is run as an intensive at the beginning of the second year. Additionally, students must meet the datelines to produce relevant placement checks to be interviewed by the university placement panel and be selected as placement ready.

## Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit students should be able to:

- Carry out counselling using the models and approaches taught in the course.
- Demonstrate a capacity to reflect on their assessments and practice and to communicate their thinking to other professionals in appropriate language.
- Demonstrate the capacity to engage a range of clients and create purposeful contracts for counselling.
- Differentiate between counsellors' needs and issues and those of the client.
- Establish a supervision contract and follow this through.
- Recognise limitations and constraints and take these into account in their work.
- Show a capacity to take on agency policy and procedures and take these appropriately into account while engaged in the placement

## Alternate Research Option

Instead of Field Placement related units, students wishing to progress through the alternate track to complete the Research Option in the program will do the following units:

COU6433 Counselling Research: Project Preparation  
 COU6228 Counselling Research Project  
 COU6230 Counselling Research Project Report

Further queries regarding this option should be directed to

Dr Elizabeth Izett

Course Coordinator - Counselling & Psychotherapy

Edith Cowan University | School of Arts and Humanities

Phone: [86304 6894](tel:863046894) (Work)

Email: [e.izett@ecu.edu.au](mailto:e.izett@ecu.edu.au)

# Placement Requirements

## Student Role and Responsibilities

It is expected that students will be active agents of their learning and development within the agency. This will require students to take responsibility for making their learning needs to be known and be able to receive and give feedback professionally and reflectively. As part of a working team, students will have to balance their needs against those of all stakeholders.

It is important to remember that students are guests within the agency. Therefore, students will be expected to follow ALL agency policies and protocols regarding case management and counselling practices. This is the case even if the agency does not utilise the student's preferred models or counselling practices. Failure to comply with agency policies may result in a grade of fail in the unit.

Student Expectations and Responsibilities on Placement:

- 1) complying with the specific relevant requirements of the workplace as set down in the Host's policies and procedures, including any dress standards, hours of attendance and occupational health and safety requirements;
- 2) complying with and, where relevant, providing evidence of meeting any pre-requisites for attendance at the workplace, including certification requirements and participation in induction programs;
- 3) not undertaking a WIL activity for which they are unsuited or incapable of completing because of a medical condition or disability;
- 4) being aware of and complying with workplace policies concerning the confidentiality of information, intellectual property ownership, conflicts of interest and conformity with professional standards;
- 5) committing themselves to maximise the learning opportunities provided by the placement and meeting the course and unit assessment requirements;
- 6) engaging constructively and appropriately with the Host supervisor and other Host staff as expected in the workplace;
- 7) notifying the ECU Placement Coordinator about any inter-personal workplace conflicts that might arise and constructively participating in attempts to resolve any such occurrences; and
- 8) acting in a manner consistent with the provisions of relevant University Statutes, Rules, Policies and Guidelines.
- 9) practice in accordance to the ECU Student Charter, rules and conducts: <https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/my-studies/rules-and-policies/student-charter>
- 10) must read and comply by the ECU WIL Placement guidelines for students [https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/873408/WIL-Guidelines-for-Students.pdf](https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/873408/WIL-Guidelines-for-Students.pdf)
- 11) actively and respectfully engage in the supervision process both at all levels
- 12) practice in accordance with PACFA

In line with the Ethical Practice standards stated by PACFA, students as beginning practitioners are required to Care of self as a practitioner

- Practitioners pay attention to their own wellbeing as this is essential to sustaining practice.
- Practitioners take action to ensure that their work does not become detrimental to their own health or wellbeing.
- Practitioners ensure their practice is safe without taking undue risks to themselves and seek appropriate professional support as the need arises.

# Personal Preparation

## Information session

Eligible students should attend the virtual information session for L67 placement and research options held on the first week of September every year. Announcement for the information session is provided at the course orientation and on all the second-semester Blackboard sites by the second or third week of August.

The information session will provide details about the forthcoming placement process and requirements including the application datelines. The placement Application form is provided on page 20 of this manual.

## Application

Students must submit the placement application along with the required checks to be eligible for the placement interview with the university panel.

## Placement Checks and Requirements

It is the responsibility of the students to ensure that they acquire the required documents and submit them with the application form to the Professional placement coordinator to be eligible for the interview with the university panel.

All costs related to professional placement documents are the responsibility of the student.

Required documents are:

- Completed Placement application form
- National Police clearance (recent)
- Unexpired WWCC
- Professional CV for placement

Additionally, as per the Department of Health WA issued directions, students on placement require mandatory COVID-19 vaccination.

Students must also plan life to accommodate placements and units across both semesters. It will be a heavy study load. To cater to the shifting needs of the industry and to be more available, students must at least allocate two days a week for placement.

Students to also consider the following conditions and factors at the application phase:

## Disability or Health Conditions

If you have a permanent or temporary disability or medical condition that may affect you while you study, or if you are the primary carer of a family member with a disability or medical condition, you should contact our [Equity Diversity and Disability Office](#).

## Conflicts of Interest

Students should declare any conflict of interest in the Student Disclosure Form. Especially situations that may influence the sourcing, negotiation, and finalisation of a placement.

Examples of a conflict of interest for a student include:

- Being a member of any of a placement agency's governing bodies or committees.
- Being a current client of the placement agency.
- Having a family member who is currently employed or a client of the agency.
- Having a current or prior close relationship with someone at the agency.

Before undertaking a placement, or during the placement, the Field Placement Coordinator and the student will work together to avoid any perceived conflict of interest during the placement. For instance, a student may not undertake the placement at an agency where he/she is currently employed, offered employment or where he/she has sought or is seeking counselling services.

## Panel interview and Placement Agency Allocation

Eligible students are interviewed by the university panel led by the placement coordinator from October – January, this group of interviewees include the continuing L67 students and J54 students who are selected into L67.

Panel Interviews help discern a student's readiness and fitness to placement and their suitability to a range of counselling agencies with placement offers. Crucially, as stated in the ECU WIL Policy (PL262), the placement interview ensures students have the capacity to safely and professionally undertake a Placement, including:

- a) being emotionally, behaviourally and ethically prepared for the demands of placement; and
- b) having an ability to meet all professional requirements and capabilities, and placement specific expectations; and
- c) being able to consistently apply the principles defined in the Student Code of Conduct.

As stated by the ECU WIL Policy (clause 4.13) when considering the capacity to safely and/or competently undertake a Work Integrated Learning (Placement) activity, a range of factors should be considered in relation to the context of course inherent requirements, and academic requirements for the Work Integrated Learning activity including:

- a. physical or mental health;
- b. interpersonal skills;
- c. demonstrated ability to behave in a manner which aligns with relevant professional ethical requirements or behavioural expectations;
- d. demonstrated ability to self-regulate and present in a professional manner;
- e. ability to demonstrate the University's values and contribute positively to the University's reputation.

Students do not qualify to attend the interview with the university panel if they have not submitted the required documents (Application, CV, NPC, WWCC) or have missed the submission dateline.

Results of the interview will be communicated at the interview and where necessary with recommendations and cautions from the panel.

Students are not to expect to be placed in their preferred areas as this is not possible given the complexity of acquiring placements. Students must be ready to undertake a placement at any allocated agency unless there is a risk associated with the student. Again, it is a student's responsibility to alert the placement coordinator to their areas of concern.

Students to be aware at this stage that the counselling and psychotherapy services across agencies vary and so the type of agencies that ECU will be operating with for placements. Thus, students are not to expect finding placement in standard counselling and psychotherapy settings but be prepared to work with diversity in settings and ways counselling and psychotherapy services are rendered.

Note that the Field Placement Coordinator will contact and engage with the agencies on behalf of ECU. Students are welcome to share/provide names of potential agencies to the Professional Field Placement coordinator and they are encouraged to do this at the placement interview.

### University Panel selected students prepare for Interviews with potential agencies

The Field Placement Coordinator in consultation with the students then aims to match up students to available agencies based on the student's background and experience.

Selected student CVs will be sent out to the agencies and if selected by the agency students will be called for interviews. A student's CV will be emailed to one agency at a time and until a response is received from the agency, the CV will not be moved to another available offer.

After an interview, it is the decision of the agency as to whether they offer the student placement. Thus, whilst every effort is made to find a suitable placement for a student, it may occasionally be the case that a student is rejected by several agencies and is unable to undertake a placement in that year.

Access to agency placements is competitive – across not only this course, but a range of other related fields, and across other Universities. The University will try its best to provide students with a

maximum of three opportunities to submit their CVs to potential agencies with placement offers. If a CV of a student or a student interviewee is rejected by two-three agencies, then the student will be advised to gain some voluntary experience to strengthen their candidature and potential to be selected on placement by the agencies in the future. In such a case, a student may need to defer their placement units for a year and try again in the following year. Alternately, students also have the choice of undertaking the research option to complete the L67 course.

### **At the Agency Interviews**

The Postgraduate Field Placement Coordinator will contact the agency to discuss the responsibilities and requirements of both the student and the agency providing the placement.

Upon availability of a placement offer, it is the student's responsibility to confirm arrangements for an interview with the agency as advised by the Placement Coordinator. Students should conduct themselves as they would for an interview with a prospective employer.

In most circumstances, agencies allocate the day/days for placement. However, in some instances, students may negotiate and allocate their day/days of placement with the agency by considering their classes across both semesters. It is also the responsibility of the student as a professional postgraduate student to state their concerns (developmental needs) at these interviews. Placements provide a learning context to the students and so students are expected to identify areas for improvement and seek support for their learning from the agency supervisors.

After an interview, it is the decision of the agency as to whether they offer the student placement. Thus, whilst every effort is made to find a suitable placement for a student, it may occasionally be the case that a student is rejected by several agencies and is unable to undertake the fieldwork placement.

## **Placement confirmed and next steps**

Enrolment in the Placement unit should be complete as early as possible because placement cannot be sought for students who are not enrolled in the placement units. All students must be enrolled by the first week of the academic session and have submitted the following required documents to SONIA:

- CV
- Police check
- WWCC
- Placement Agreement (see below for details on this document)
- And any additional documents asked by the University, this include evidence of COVID-19 vaccination which is as per the Department of Health WA issued directions.

This process is important for insurance purposes. If a student delays this process, they are at risk of not being covered by the ECU insurance while on placement thus may not be permitted on site (placement).

### **SONIA**

SONIA is used University-wide for placements. It allows students to easily maintain their requirements for placement. Students should watch the PowerPoint and short YouTube video available on the School of Arts & Humanities placement's website <https://www.ecu.edu.au/schools/arts-and-humanities/courses/professional-placement>.

### **Placement Agreement and start dates**

A formal process is completed between the University and each external Agency providing a placement resulting in a Placement Agreement. This involves consideration and documentation of responsibilities such as student Risk Management, Occupational Health and Safety obligations and insurance policies. Students will be required to sign the relevant documentation as part of the process of commencing placement. The Placement Agreement will be available on the COU6424 Blackboard site for students to sign and complete the agreement process.

Once accepted for Field Placement, the starting date, the day, and hours of the placement are negotiated between the agency supervisor and the student – with the student responsible for keeping the Field Placement Coordinator informed. The student is responsible for completing a range of tasks

over the semester. Full details about tasks, responsibilities and assessments are provided on the COU6424 Blackboard site and will be provided at the first placement seminar.

## Insurance

The University has effected the following forms of insurance in respect of student practicums with host organisations, these are as follows:

- a) Public Liability Insurance;
- b) Professional Indemnity Insurance; and
- c) Personal Accident Insurance.

All matters affecting the insurance programme of the University is the responsibility of the ECU Manager, Business Risk & Resilience. Should any organisation desire confirmation of insurance or an explanation of the University's insurances it should be referred to the Manager, Business Risk & Resilience and at no time should any other person provide details of the University's insurances.

In particular, should any organisation request the signing of any agreement including indemnities, without the prior knowledge of the Manager, Business Risk and Resilience and the University's insurers, the above insurances may be considered void. It is a breach of the conditions of the University's insurance to sign any particular agreement modifying insurer's rights and providing indemnities to other organisations. All such matters must be referred to the University's Manager, Business Risk and Resilience.

From time-to-time University staff may be asked to provide proof of workers' compensation insurance in respect of the West Australian Workers' Compensation Rehabilitation Act 1981. As students are not employees of the University and do not receive remuneration from the University there is no legal obligation nor is the University able to insure students under workers' compensation. As students do not meet the definition of worker under the act, it is illegal for the University to provide such cover. When a host organisation requests such insurance details this should be referred to the University's Manager, Business Risk and Resilience for advice.

Should host organisations request proof of our Public Liability Insurance, you may download the Certificate of Insurance from publications "Certificate of Currency" found at the RASC Insurance home page. Certificates of currency can be accessed here: <http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/staff/centres/risk-and-assurance-services/insurance/certificate-of-currency>

As mentioned above, ECU have effected, for all enrolled students of Edith Cowan University, Personal Accident cover for practicums, work experience and/or field trips authorised by the University. Details can be found at the RASC Insurance home page.

In respect of all matters relating to risk management, contact Darryl Welsby, Manager, Business Risk and Resilience on [d.welsby@ecu.edu.au](mailto:d.welsby@ecu.edu.au) or 6304 2426 for advice and guidance.

## University Travel Policy

Regardless of whether the student pays for the placement, if the student is located more than 50kms away from home and is staying at the location, they should complete a Student Travel Approval Form to trigger the travel insurance. It can cover all parts of the insurance cover except medical expenses. Otherwise, students would only have access to automatic Personal Accident and General Liability cover (<https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/staff/centres/strategic-and-governance-services/our-services/risk-and-assurance/insurance/certificate-of-currency>) for the clinical placement activities.

**A flowchart of the placement process is projected on the next page**

# Overview of the Placement Process

## 1. Preparation for Placement: STUDENTS MUST NOT MISS THE APPLICATION DATELINE PROVIDED AT THE INFORMATION SESSION.

- September of the previous year: Attend information session for prospective students (L67 & J54). Announcement will be posted to semester two-unit BB sites.
- Prospective students to review the most recent placement manual at <https://www.ecu.edu.au/schools/arts-and-humanities/courses/professional-placement/essential-documents/counselling-and-psychotherapy> to familiarise with placement expectations and requirements.
- Complete the Student Placement application form found in the placement manual
- Submit the application with the required up to date documents (professional CV, National Police Clearance, WWCC).

## 2. University Placement progress and Agency Allocation (October- March)

- Upon completion of stage 1 stated above. The placement coordinator will call the potential students who have fulfilled the prerequisite units and submitted the required documents by the stated dateline for an interview with University Panel led by the Field Placement Coordinator/Unit Coordinator
- Selected students are informed of the process forward
- CVs of selected students are distributed to agencies with placement offers. Students will have the opportunity to submit their CVs to at least 2 – 3 agencies. But an interview/s cannot be guaranteed by the University as the decision at this stage depends on the agencies and is often dictated by the CVs of the students.
- Selected students attend the placement selection interview held by the agencies
- Students may have to wait for an interview for weeks or months. Some students may not get a response from the agencies until March (placement commencement period).
- Selected students receive confirmation/ outcome of placement interviews from the agencies.

## 3. What next?

- Students who are selected and offered placements by agencies: Follow the timeline provided by the University to commence placement
- Students who do not get an interview or are not selected by the agencies: Strengthen their CV and try again during the next intake or consider options.

## 4. On Placement

- Ensure SONIA documents are uploaded and complete before commencing placement
- Ensure Placement agreement/Risk assessment is signed and uploaded to SONIA before commencing placement
- Work on Assessments and keep to the datelines
- Regular update to the Field placement coordinator/Unit coordinator
- Must attend three on-campus placement seminars
- See the manual for other requirements

## While on Placement

ECU has a Student Charter (available at <http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/charter/>) and University Rules ([http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/governance\\_services/uni\\_rules.html](http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/governance_services/uni_rules.html)). Even though you are on placement and you are probably off-campus, the Student Charter and University Rules still apply.

Your roles and responsibilities as a student may extend before and after the period in which you are on placement. However, be aware that you must not attempt or ask to perform tasks beyond the requirements of the placement activity. ECU expects you to become familiar with the particular organisation in which you are placed and adhere to their guidelines, and in particular:

- hours of work;
- attending their briefing for terms, conditions and regulations;
- following their procedures and abide by their regulations e.g. OSH: safety, fire, hygiene, equipment, health;
- uniform and equipment;
- meeting with or communicating with your mentor/supervisor;
- undertaking all duties as directed by the placement manager/supervisor; and
- accepting and following directions from placement agency and ECU supervisors.

ECU expects you to:

- adhere to relevant professional codes of ethics;
- demonstrate a high standard of honesty, integrity and social responsibility;
- conduct yourself in a manner that reflects well on the University;
- recognise your roles as a representative of the University, School and of your course;
- represent the ECU values and mission;
- meet with or communicate with your ECU placement coordinator and supervisor as required;
- perform the roles at standards of performance required of you by ECU;
- ensure you do not post comments which relate to any aspect of your placement experience on social media;
- ensure you are fit for placement and will not cause harm to yourself or others by undertaking a work placement experience; and
- complete all applicable forms on time.

Also, as a student on placement, you are responsible for:

1. **Communication:** The smooth running of your placement opportunity is dependent on good and open communication. As you ask questions in an open manner you will find out the expectations of you.
2. **Safety:** For your safety and those in your host organisation, you must make any relevant information about medical and other issues known to your ECU placement coordinator who will advise you as to what may need to be disclosed to the placement. The placement agency will need your emergency contact details.
3. **Placement host agency:** It is important to understand the protocols of the agency. While protocols vary from one agency to another, it is important for you to find out as quickly as possible what is and what is not appropriate for you as a student in their placement. For example, sometimes it is appropriate to demonstrate initiative while at other times it may seem that being proactive is not welcomed. Communication and active listening will be a key to finding the balance and fitting into the placement.
4. **Professional conduct:** In matters of dress, conduct, attendance, punctuality and co-operation, all students are expected to comply with placement protocols and courtesies. You must take reasonable care when performing activities and you are expected to accept direction from and undertake all duties as directed by placement agency and ECU supervisors. The placements are unpaid and do not create a relationship of employment between students and the host organisation or ECU. Even though students are not employees of their host organisations

however, they should conduct themselves with the same standard of professionalism that would be expected of an employee.

5. **Confidentiality:** An understanding of the nature of privacy, confidentiality and respect is essential, as a breach of ethics may have consequences detrimental to placement clients, the host organisation, and you, the student. As a student, you should exercise discretion in criticising the host organisation or its personnel. In all instances, you should conduct yourself as an adult and professional individual. Professional ethics extend to the exchange of information and interacting with all people both in the placement and beyond the placement.
6. **Transport:** You are required to arrange and provide your own transport to the various venues and workplaces. Also, you need to make your own parking arrangements and take care not to park in the employee parking bays unless this is offered.
7. **Accident or critical incident:** If you are involved in or witness an accident or incident, you are obliged to complete the ECU Online Accident Report Form (available at [http://www.hr.ecu.edu.au/osh/html/accident\\_incident\\_homepage.cfm](http://www.hr.ecu.edu.au/osh/html/accident_incident_homepage.cfm) ) and a copy is to be provided to the participating organisation as soon as reasonably possible.

Critical incidents arising during a Work Integrated Learning activity will be handled in accordance with the University's Critical Incident Management policy.

## Agency Supervision

The Supervisory process is central to developing clinical understanding and appropriate counselling and psychotherapy interventions. Within the field of counselling and psychotherapy, supervision is considered essential for membership of professional bodies as well as for the ongoing development of professional practice. This process should be supportive but challenging in terms of the development of the student's capacities. Supervision will include both clinical supervision and caseload management. That is, as well as focusing on individual sessions and the clinical interventions, Supervisors will also be focusing on the range of cases that students are carrying and how they are managing all of their cases.

The course is accredited by PACFA and in keeping with PACFA requirements, all supervisors are required to have at least 5 years of clinical experience or must have been clinical members of a relevant professional association for at least 2 years.

Supervisors are requested to provide at least one hour of individual supervision per week for the period of the placement. This should be primarily focused on the student's clinical work with clients and should assist students to integrate theory with appropriate clinical interventions.

Supervision should take account of practice, the use of self by the student counsellor, any issues of interaction between client and counsellor, and the process of engaging in supervision itself. In addition, Supervisors are requested to provide adequate time to orient students to the agency and discuss any problems as they arise.

Issues raised in the work with clients and/or the supervisory process can stimulate existing personal issues for students. This can normally be processed in supervision, but students are encouraged to seek counselling individually if the issues are creating personal difficulties. Students may pursue their counselling privately or through the University student counselling service. Supervisors may make this suggestion if they feel it is appropriate, but the final responsibility for acting on the suggestion and making the necessary arrangements lies with the student. In circumstances where difficulties are identified as impacting on placement performance, the ECU Field Placement Coordinator should be advised, so that appropriate support, and where necessary, additional supervision, can be arranged.

## Difficulties on Placement

### Students facing difficulties on placement

If there are any difficulties, additional meetings between the Field Placement Coordinator, the agency Supervisor and the student can be arranged at the Supervisor or the student's request. This is best done well before the end of the semester so that any arising problems can be addressed early.

Any difficulties from a student perspective should be raised first with the agency Supervisor. If it is not possible to resolve the difficulties, then the University Field Placement Coordinator should be contacted immediately. Where necessary and relevant, the Placement Coordinator may call upon a university review team to respond to the presenting issue posed by a student or by an agency.

### Managing difficulties / ECU Services

If you are having difficulties managing your obligations for a unit involving the placement, please arrange an appointment for a discussion with your placement coordinator as soon as reasonably possible. Please refer to the ECU Student Guide to find the health, careers and counselling services available to students.

Students participating in Work Integrated Learning/placements are required to:

- a. act in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and the University's Fitness to Study policy.
- b. successfully complete any relevant and required orientation and induction;
- c. ensure timely compliance with workplace health and safety requirements and any other workplace or professional ethical guidelines;
- d. take responsibility for learning by participating fully in the learning process and undertaking all learning opportunities provided;
- e. proactively communicate with Work Integrated Learning/Placement supervisors, engage in communication with the University and notify the University of any problems that arise; and
- f. ensure all attendance and assessment requirements are satisfactorily completed.

Where a student does not comply with the obligations outlined above, the University may, subject to and in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules, the General Misconduct Rules (Students) and the Fitness to Study policy:

- a. remove the student from placement activity;
- b. where the non-compliance results in the non-achievement of the relevant learning outcome(s) for the placement activity, award a grade that results in a fail for that unit, part of the unit, or course, in accordance with the Assessment Policy and Assessment, Examination and Moderation procedures; and/or
- c. take action to exclude the student from future placement activities.

## Assessment

This unit is assessed on a Pass/Fail basis and contains three Mandatory Assessment Tasks. Assessment tasks details will be provided on the COU6424 Blackboard site.

A student who fails a Mandatory Assessment Task will be deemed not to have completed that Unit.

Assessment tasks involve multiple assessors, namely the placement agency supervisors/managers and the placement coordinator. Thus, students must be aware to actively communicate and involve all relevant assessors to meet the assessment tasks in a timely and professional manner.

The placement coordinator will be in touch (via email and or telephone) with the agency contacts (supervisors/managers) during the midsemester review and toward the end of the semester to finalize feedback on the relevant assessment pieces and discuss the student's progress.

Although the Supervisor's feedback and input form the major part of the assessments, the final responsibility for assessing student progress rests with the Unit Coordinator/the Field Placement Coordinator.

### Unsatisfactory performance during a placement activity

Unsatisfactory performance may contribute to a final fail grade in a course or a final fail grade in a unit. Unsatisfactory performance may include one or more of the following:

- failure to meet the assessment or attendance requirements as detailed in the unit outline,
- failure to adhere to professional standards and workplace requirements,
- incomplete or late completion of documentation, or
- failure to discuss a critical incident or issue of concern with your ECU Placement coordinator and or contact person as soon as reasonably possible.

### Termination of placement

As a representative of the University, you should clearly understand that the University and School have high expectations in relation to your performance whilst in any placement setting. In short, you are representing not only yourself but your peers and staff of the University. It should be clearly understood therefore that if for any reason the host organisation calls your placement into question; your placement learning may be terminated immediately. In turn, this may lead to the award of a fail grade for the unit and possible disciplinary action within the University.

### Field Placement Coordinator Role

The Placement Coordinator will be your prime contact throughout the tenure of your placement units. The placement coordinator will be your first point of contact for support and communication. The placement coordinator is also the university representative to the host agencies and their main contact concerning the student placements.

## Question and Answer

Here are some potential questions and relevant responses to assist you about placement:

- 1) What should I do if I make a mistake?
  - A. Don't panic! Everyone makes mistakes. The best thing to do is to advise your supervisor and Unit Coordinator/placement coordinator as soon as possible to discuss what has happened. The worst thing you can do is stew on the matter and hope it will go away (which it probably won't!)
- 2) What should I do if I am not comfortable working with my supervisor?
  - A. Contact the Unit Coordinator/Placement coordinator immediately to discuss some strategies on how to manage the situation.
- 3) I am being given lots of administrative tasks to do. What should I do?
  - A. Every job requires some administration, it is normal to do scanning, photocopying and typing as part of a job role. It is also important that you learn to use your initiative and try and work autonomously – where possible – on the placement task. Saying this, it is also important – for your own learning and for the successful completion of the placement – that you are able to seek advice when you need it. If you are struggling to do this then ask to make an appointment with your supervisor to review your progress. Use your learning agreement and targeted strategies to guide your discussion and make it clear that you feel you are capable of and need to do, more to achieve your goals.

# Forms section

## Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy

Field Placement Manual  
COU6424 Field Placement 1



Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy  
COU6424 Field Placement 1

**Postgraduate Placement Application**

(Ensure that your application is typed neatly,  
complete and presented professionally)

Placements are a crucial component of any clinical course and have become increasingly competitive across courses, universities, and colleges. University Panel Interviews help discern a student's readiness and fitness to placement and their suitability to a range of counselling agencies with placement offers. Crucially, as stated in the ECU WIL Policy (PL262), the placement interview ensures students have the capacity to safely and professionally undertake a Placement, including:

- a) being emotionally, behaviourally and ethically prepared for the demands of placement; and
- b) having an ability to meet all professional requirements and capabilities, and placement specific expectations; and
- c) being able to consistently apply the principles defined in the Student Code of Conduct.

**Student Contact Details**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID.No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Student email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile contact: \_\_\_\_\_

**Experience**

Previous Counselling experience (Employment and volunteer positions):

Clinical strengths and areas to be further developed:

Provide a brief statement outlining your experience of supervision to date and your expectations of supervision within an agency context:

### Area of strength

Do you have a special set of skills that is suited to a particular client population or type of services?

Do you have any specific area/type of service that you would rather not work in? Please state your reason briefly and state this in your interview with the panel.

### Conflict of Interest

Please advise of any agencies where you have been a client, have a spouse, child or other family member attending or employed that are relevant to the field.

### CHECKLIST

The following checks must accompany this application to qualify for the panel interview:

- 1) professional CV
- 2) a recent (within a month) National Police Clearance
- 3) Working with Children Check
- 4) Evidence of COVID-19 Vaccination (this is as per the recent Department of Health directions)

### Submission

By submitting this form. I declare:

- I agree to read and familiarise myself with the requirement of the placement.
- I have attached the required checks and documents
- I agree to advise of any change in my circumstances which are likely to impact upon placement throughout the period of my study.
- I consent to my personal information to be forwarded to prospective agencies.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form along with the relevant checks in one email (not fragmented) to the Postgraduate Field Placement Coordinator/Unit Coordinator, Counselling and Psychotherapy Program, Dr Sonam Pelden: [s.pelden@ecu.edu.au](mailto:s.pelden@ecu.edu.au). After the applications have been assessed, students will be contacted by the Field placement coordinator for the university panel interviews from October – March.**

Edith Cowan University – School of Arts and Humanities  
Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy  
COU6424 Field Placement 1

### **MORE INFORMATION**

Student Recruitment Telephone: 134 ECU (134 328)

Email: [futurestudy@ecu.edu.au](mailto:futurestudy@ecu.edu.au)

Web: [www.ecu.edu.au](http://www.ecu.edu.au)

