A23.0: Work-based Learning Policy

1. Context

Practical experience is an important part of student learning. It provides opportunities to apply theory in workplace contexts, and develop employability skills relating to communication, teamwork, problem solving, self-management, planning and organising, and initiative and enterprise. All Torrens University Australia undergraduate programs include a compulsory supervised industry placement project which is integrated with campus-based preparatory classes and reflective classes. This Policy describes the University’s approach to work-based learning, and outlines the rights and obligations of students, placement providers and the University. The University values its relationships with external stakeholders and seeks to develop arrangements for work-based learning for mutual benefit.

2. Definitions

Placement provider: a workplace providing a work-based learning environment to a Torrens University Australia student.

Work-based learning: unpaid, structured learning in a workplace which is subject to a written agreement between the placement provider, the student and the University.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all students who are enrolled in a work-based learning course as a component of their program requirements. This policy also applies to Torrens University Australia staff involved in developing relationships with placement providers and in supervising placements.

4. Principles

Torrens University Australia will:

- ensure the equitable allocation of available placements, taking into account the preferences of students wherever possible;
- take all reasonable precautions to ensure the health and welfare of students on placement;
- risk assess and quality assure placements to ensure learning outcomes are met;
- monitor the progress and attendance requirements of students while on placement, and
- ensure that all those involved in a placement are appropriately oriented, and aware of their rights and responsibilities.
5. Selection and approval of placement providers

The University is responsible for identifying and engaging placement providers who can provide:
- a safe, positive and ethical learning environment for students;
- suitable induction, training, and mentoring in professional behavior;
- varied experiences to students that support the attainment of course learning objectives and the University’s Graduate Attributes; and
- appropriate supervision and performance evaluation of students.

A risk assessment will be carried out on all placement providers before a Provider Placement Agreement is signed. The Provider Placement Agreement will outline the responsibilities of the University and the placement provider, and will include insurance, dispute resolution and termination clauses.

The risk assessment will include a visit to the placement provider’s premises, an interview with potential supervisors of students, and agreement about on-site visits by University supervisors during the placement. A review of workplace safety requirements and the identification of potential hazards is an important element of the risk assessment.

Placements will be evaluated by students, University supervisors and placement providers at the end of each placement to ensure the ongoing value to both the industry partner and to future students.

Approved placement providers will be listed on the University website and will be invited, via the relevant Discipline Advisory Panels, to participate in reviewing and improving the work-based learning program and associated policies.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Placement Provider

The placement provider will:
- nominate a workplace supervisor to be responsible for the student during the placement;
- provide the student with the appropriate orientation, induction and training in the organisation’s policies, procedures and rules including safe work procedures;
- inform students that they must comply with the organisation’s policies and rules with respect to behaviour and discipline whilst undertaking a placement;
- provide the appropriate facilities, equipment and learning experiences for the student, taking into account the level of the student’s skills and experience;
- immediately notify the University if the student is injured or involved in any adverse incident at the placement premises;
- notify the University if the student does not meet agreed attendance requirements;
- comply with its obligations under applicable equal opportunity, anti-discrimination and workplace health and safety laws;
- maintain confidentiality regarding the University’s confidential information and comply with applicable privacy laws in regards to a student’s personal information;
- participate in the assessment of the student’s performance against a pre-agreed list of expectations;
- Appropriately manage records relating to the student including attendance and progress reviews;
• hold public liability insurance.

6.2 Torrens University Australia
The University will:
• nominate a University supervisor for the student who will liaise with the placement provider about all aspects of the placement;
• monitor student progress and ensure that assessment appropriately aligns with students’ expected learning outcomes and tasks;
• inform the student of confidentiality, privacy and other obligations, including their responsibility to adhere to all relevant workplace policies of the placement provider, including policies relating to behavior and dress code;
• provide students, particularly international students, with information about the Australian workplace, including workplace culture, diversity, and relevant legislation and rights of employees;
• ensure that students apply for and obtain any clearances required by the placement provider (police check, working with children check);
• maintain worker’s compensation, public liability and professional indemnity insurance to cover liability of the University and its staff on the placement provider’s premises.

6.3 Torrens University Australia student
• while on placement, behave in a manner appropriate to that of an employee of the placement provider and in compliance with the Torrens University Australia’s Student Code of Conduct;
• adhere to the professional ethics and codes of conduct appropriate to the discipline of the placement;
• maintain communication with the workplace supervisor as required;
• raise issues of concern with the workplace supervisor and the University supervisor;
• complete and submit required assessments;
• advise the placement co-ordinator of any fact which may affect their capacity to undertake the placement, such as a disability or personal difficulty.
• Use resources available at the placement site for the purposes they are intended.
• Sign a Student Placement Agreement which outlines the student’s rights and responsibilities, and scope of the work they will undertake while on placement.

7. Allocation of placements
The course co-ordinator for the Industry Placement Project will be responsible for allocating available placements. Students will nominate three preferred placement providers and will also have the opportunity to include a justified request not to participate in a particular placement. Reasons may include a conflict of interest, a disability that would be difficult to accommodate by the placement provider, or extreme difficulty in accessing transportation. While every effort will be made to accommodate student preferences, there will be no guarantee that a student will be placed in an organisation on their list of preferences.

8. Appeals
Students may access the Student Grievance Management Policy and Procedures if they have a complaint about the allocation of a placement, or a University response to concerns expressed about any aspect of their placement.