

Faculty of Business

Work Placements

Information for Host Organisations

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INTRODUCTION

Students enrolled in the **Bachelor of Business** degree will have the opportunity to undertake three (3) work placements over the course of their studies.

Students enrolled in the **Bachelor of Accounting** degree will have the opportunity to undertake at least one (1) work placement over the course of their studies.

Students undertaking a Bachelor of Business degree at Charles Sturt University must enrol in the following subjects, either as a requirement of their degree, or as an elective (depending upon their particular degree):

Subject Code	Title	Hours of Placement
BUS110	Workplace Learning 1	35
BUS220	Workplace Learning 2	70
BUS370	Workplace Learning 3	120

Students undertaking a Bachelor of Accounting degree at Charles Sturt University must enrol in the following subject, either as a requirement of their degree, or as an elective (depending upon their particular degree):

Subject Code	Title	Hours of Placement
ACC275	Professional Practice in Accounting	100

In order to fulfil the requirements of each subject, students must complete a placement which involves working in a relevant organisational or business context for the specified hours (see hours listed in tables above). During their placement, students should be engaged in a process of personal reflection and journal keeping. That reflection is particularly focussed around the following learning aims:

- Understanding the way university study links to workplace practice.
- Understanding individual goals, skills, knowledge and reflecting upon how they might continue to learn and develop now and into the future.

The students undertaking work placements will come from a variety of situations; they will be enrolled in different modes of study (e.g. by distance or on-campus classes) and will be at varying stages of their degree. Some students will have had little or no prior work experience other than casual jobs, whilst others may be settled in full-time employment.

We understand that individual organisations may have varying capacities to assist students in achieving the subject aims; however, most organisations can provide a setting where students can appreciate the workplace and attempt to contextualise their university studies within that workplace.

For students who are currently employed, we understand that it is often impractical for them to seek placements elsewhere and therefore encourage them to make use of their current workplace. In this instance students need to consult with their employer to identify

a new task or project outside the scope of their normal duties that will enable them to satisfy the requirements of the placement.

Students undertaking placements will be assigned to one of two Streams (depending upon their individual circumstances):

Stream 1	Placement with NEW host organisation (where the business is NOT the student's usual employer)
Stream 2	Placement with EXISTING host organisation (where the business IS the student's usual employer)

BACHELOR OF BUSINESS AND BACHELOR OF ACCOUNTING

Graduates of Charles Sturt University's business and accounting degrees have good prospects in a wide range of career paths in private and government organisations. The degrees develop students' critical analysis, scientific method and fundamental thinking. It prepares them to ask the right questions, search for relevant data and interpret results. Students develop communication skills such as rational argument, critical evaluation and effective listening/writing.

The degrees provide students with the skills that will help them become effective managers able to understand the needs of their subordinates, apply technology, and have an extensive knowledge of the political, economic and social environment.

Graduates are expected to gain the necessary conceptual abilities, analytical skills and knowledge to equip them for a variety of professional career opportunities in industry, commerce or government service.

WHY DO STUDENTS HAVE PLACEMENTS?

Placements will allow students to gain practical experience in a professional setting as part of their academic training course. A placement will be most valuable to students if they are assigned a variety of duties and are considered a 'professional' in training. Some benefits which students are likely to obtain from the program include a closer integration of theory and practice, valuable insights into organisational life and the opportunity to accept more responsibility and achieve greater self-reliance. Students will also benefit by being able to indicate relevant work experience on their resume when applying for graduate positions. Where the experience has been a mutually satisfying one, students often benefit if their placement 'host' is willing to provide a reference or act as a referee for them when seeking their first professional job.

WHY SHOULD AN ORGANISATION TAKE A PLACEMENT STUDENT?

Host organisations provide placements for a variety of reasons, for example:

- (a) an obligation to the profession to provide leadership in the training of future professionals;
- (b) an opportunity to evaluate prospective future employees;
- (c) a desire to help students gain practical experience; and
- (d) an opportunity to contribute in a tangible and formal way to the program offered by Charles Sturt University.

We understand that the supervision and mentoring of a placement student can add some workload to the host. However, there are certainly several potential benefits. Many host organisations benefit by assigning students specific projects to complete. Sometimes these projects have remained untouched because of work pressures. While the student may not take the project to final implementation, they can often do the ground work that brings the project nearer to completion.

Placement students can also be engaged in completing professional/administrative tasks that might alleviate some workload from their host managers or other staff members. The students will certainly benefit from doing tasks that might be assigned to a new graduate in a first job. In that sense, with some guidance, you have additional assistance for the period of the placement. These activities will help develop student confidence and understanding.

Engaging students in some routine workplace activities (but not an excessive amount) such as photocopying, faxing, telephoning, composing memos/letters etc means the organisation can benefit from the labour of their placement students. While we do not wish the students to be left to do just low-level clerical or office tasks for their placement, some involvement in such tasks will help them to become familiar with, and competent in, basic office activities.

HOW IS THE PLACEMENT ARRANGED?

Students in the Professional Placement subject undertake some learning modules that help prepare them for the placement experience. They are also guided to understand the requirements and expectations of their placements including issues of insurance and confidentiality.

Students typically find their own host organisation (they may write/phone) but we also encourage organisations looking for students to contact us so that we may endeavour to fulfil the needs of both students and organisations. The student is responsible for working out an agreement with the host organisations as to:

- (a) nature of duties to be assigned;
- (b) hours to be worked;
- (c) precise dates on which the placement is to begin and end.

This information is formalised in a tripartite agreement known as the “Business Student Placement Agreement” (Form B). The student should present you with this agreement for signature along with a copy of the latest University insurance information for your records. Samples of these are included in this booklet for your reference or copies may be obtained from the Workplace Learning Placement Officer (contact details on first page). The agreement needs to be signed by the host organisation, student and University delegate prior to a placement commencing.

ARE THE STUDENTS COVERED BY THE UNIVERSITY’S INSURANCE?

The University provides insurance cover for its placement students both within Australia and outside. This is indicated in the letters (one for domestic placements and one for those completed outside of Australia) at the end of this document. To ensure insurance coverage, it is vital that the **Business Student Placement Agreement (FORM B)** is completed and signed by all parties involved (host organisation, student and the University) prior to a placement commencing.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOST ORGANISATION?

The host organisation is expected to provide the placement student with:

- (a) a variety of responsible work tasks, opportunities for ‘shadowing’ and, if possible, the opportunity to complete a specific project for which the placement student can be in some way responsible;
- (b) adequate and professional supervision;
- (c) regular feedback to the placement student regarding his/her performance. See the comments on the evaluation form later in this document.

WHAT ARE THE PLACEMENT STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITIES?

Placement students are advised about issues such as confidentiality and privacy, and are expected to respect the organisation, its activities and personnel during and after their placement. They should not reveal any confidential information about individuals, or about commercial or other organisational matters, except where it is clearly appropriate to do so. Placement students should attend the workplace as required, adhere to any specified dress codes, and perform to the best of their ability.

It is required that placement students keep a journal so that they can reflect upon the experience and use the journal to prepare their Placement Report for the subject assessment (taking into account the issues of confidentiality). If any aspect of the placement is of concern you should contact the Manager Industry Liaison/Workplace Learning or Workplace Learning Placement Officers for advice or clarification or to resolve the problem (contact details on first page).

HOW IS THE PLACEMENT STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE EVALUATED?

Students can only achieve a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory result for the placement component of their subjects; however, we do ask employers for an honest and constructive evaluation that may help the student's development.

An evaluation form (Placement Evaluation – Form E), will be sent to you by the Workplace Learning Placement Officer. We request that this form be completed and submitted as soon as possible upon completion of a placement. This form must be sent to the Workplace Learning Unit directly and not via the student (full details relating to the submission of this are explained on the form).

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE STUDENT FAILS TO MEET STANDARDS?

Students are expected to meet their obligations to the host organisation in a conscientious and responsible manner. In the event that a placement student is not meeting his or her responsibilities or appears unable to meet minimum performance standards, the employer organisation should immediately contact the Workplace Learning Placement Officers.

FORMS AND LETTERS

Provided on the following pages are samples of the forms that you are required to complete and/or sign along with a copy of our insurance letter for your records.

Business Student Placement Agreement (Form B) - the students are expected to present you with this for signing before commencing their placement. This is a tripartite agreement which formalises the placement and ensures insurance coverage for the duration of the agreement period.

Attendance Sheet (Form C) – the students are expected to track their hours throughout the placement on this form and are required to present it you for signing upon completion of their placement.

Placement Evaluation (Form E) – this will be sent to you by the Workplace Learning Placement Officer. It is requested that this form be completed and submitted as soon as possible upon completion of a placement. Note: this form must be returned to the Workplace Learning Unit directly and not via the student (details relating to the submission are explained on the form).