

Volunteers and Work Experience Students Procedure

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1 Purpose of Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the arrangements the Department of Communities and Justice has in place for volunteers and work experience students.

2 Definitions

Definitions of terms used in this procedure can be found in the Volunteers and Work Experience Students Policy.

3 Scope and application

This procedure applies to requests from:

- members of the public who wish to volunteer with the Department
- school students seeking to undertake work experience independently with the Department. Such placements should be arranged in conjunction with the student's school and each student must have signed consent from a parent or legal guardian
- tertiary students seeking to undertake work experience with the Department outside a formal arrangement between the Department and a tertiary institution

This procedure does not apply to students who are covered by a formal arrangement between the Department and a tertiary education institution. These arrangements are described in Department's Student Placement Policy and Procedure.

This procedure does not apply to any formal volunteer program that the Department has established, or may establish. Participants in such programs would be covered by detailed program guidelines.

4 How to arrange a volunteering or work experience placement

4.1 Step 1 – the applicant contacts the local business unit manager/supervisor

Volunteering or work experience requests are managed by the local business unit manager/supervisor. Anyone who is seeking a volunteer or work experience placement with the Department should contact the manager/supervisor of the relevant area to discuss:

- the reason for seeking a volunteer placement or work experience with the Department
- the type of task(s) they are seeking to undertake and the agreed hours per week should be defined to exclude work that would ordinarily be performed by an employee of the Department in the course of their employment

- the length of the placement. The maximum length of a placement is dependent on the type of task(s) to be undertaken or work experience program and the Department's ability to accommodate the request within its business requirements (requests that include evening and weekend hours cannot be accommodated):
 - school work experience - minimum of one week and maximum of two weeks
 - TAFE and University students - by negotiation between the student and the Department for a maximum of 3 months
 - Volunteering short-term - by negotiation between the person and the Department

When approached, if the manager/supervisor is interested in pursuing the work experience or volunteering arrangement, the manager/supervisor should meet with the applicant to discuss and consider:

- the knowledge, skills and expectations of the person
- the impact of the proposed placement on clients and the work being undertaken in the area
- supervision, accommodation, equipment, and other requirements
- the Department's obligations e.g. work health and safety, client privacy and confidentiality and employment screening checks e.g. working with children's check and criminal record check
- any conflict of interest and/or obligations to declare conflicts of interest
- the responsibilities of the volunteer or student e.g. insurance, responsibilities under the Code of Ethical Conduct
- any terms and conditions or specific requirements relating to the placement
- any workplace adjustments that may be required

If it is decided to proceed with an application, the applicant and manager/supervisor should complete the form provided by the school or tertiary institution and by the Department for both volunteers and work experience students. A volunteer/ work experience student application form is provided at Attachment 1.

4.2 Step 2 – complete employment screening requirements

Volunteers and work experience students over the age of eighteen years are subject to the employment screening requirements that are set out in the Department's [Employment Screening Policy](#).

The employment screening requirements differ according to the nature of the task(s) that the person will undertake while at the Department and who they will be working with or have contact with.

Any required employment screening is to be arranged by the applicant or the relevant school or tertiary institution. Any cost must be borne by the volunteer, the student or school or tertiary institution and is required before the placement starts.

The relevant manager/supervisor must check and verify the outcomes of any checks as per the Department's Employment Screening Policy. Records should be kept as per the Employment Screening Policy.

If a clearance is not obtained, the manager/supervisor should refer to the Employment Screening Policy to confirm next steps. The matter must be treated as highly confidential and the person treated with due respect.

Where relevant, if a placement cannot proceed it is the responsibility of the manager/supervisor to notify the applicant and the school or tertiary institution.

4.3 Step 3 – obtain and check insurance coverage

The NSW Department of Education /TAFE NSW indemnifies employers participating in approved workplace learning programs for:

- any amount which they may be legally liable to pay for injury to students or teachers arising out of an approved workplace learning program, up to \$20,000,000
- for any amount which they may be legally liable to pay for property damage or personal injury to third parties caused by students or teachers in approved workplace learning programs, up to \$20,000,000.

Private schools, colleges and other tertiary institutions, must also have insurance coverage and indemnifications in place for work experience students.

As a guide, the Department's insurer has set standard levels of insurance coverage. The minimum levels of coverage are:

- Public liability insurance - \$20,000,000.
- Professional indemnity insurance - \$5,000,000.

The manager/supervisor must obtain a copy of the insurance covered before the placement starts and maintain a copy.

Student placements should not proceed without appropriate insurance coverage.

Volunteers are covered by the [Treasury Managed Fund – Statement of Cover \(2012\)](#) for death or bodily injury only and they should be advised of this by the manager/supervisor. Volunteers can purchase their own insurance. More information about the Department's insurance coverage can be obtained from your People Business Partner representative.

4.4 Step 4 – consider and approve applications

Volunteer or work experience placements must be approved by the relevant delegate (as per the relevant delegations)

Applications should be submitted with enough time for them to be considered. A minimum of two months prior to the proposed placement is generally required.

When reviewing an application, the delegate should consider the following:

- the knowledge, skills and expectations of the person
- the nature and purpose of the placement
- the task(s) to be undertaken
- the duration of the placement including the agreed hours per week
- supervision and reporting arrangements
- the impact of proposed placement on operations of the work area
- supervision, accommodation, equipment, and other requirements
- department's obligations e.g. work health and safety, client privacy
- any conflict of interest and/or obligations to declare conflicts of interest
- the responsibilities of the volunteer or student e.g. insurances, indemnity, code of conduct
- any workplace adjustments that may be required
- any terms and conditions or specific requirements relating to the placement

Applicants may be required to attend an interview and provide work or character references before an application is approved.

5 What happens when a placement starts

5.1 Step 1 - confirm placement has been approved

Once an application has been approved by the delegate, a manager/supervisor will be identified to act as the primary manager/supervisor for the duration of the placement.

The manager/supervisor will confirm that the placement has been approved with the volunteer or student and their school or tertiary institution and confirm the dates and attendance hours along with the details of where to report on the first day.

A volunteer or student must not perform any task(s) until the relevant manager/supervisor has ensured the necessary employment screening checks have been conducted and verified, has received a copy of the relevant insurance documents and confirmed the student or volunteer has read the Department's Code of Ethical Conduct.

The manager/supervisor is then responsible for:

- confirming that the necessary employment screening requirements have been met
- inducting the volunteer or student. Induction will include, but is not limited, to
 - expected standard of performance, conduct and attendance – in line with the Code of Ethical Conduct (these discussions also need to be had with the applicant earlier)
 - other relevant departmental policies and legislation
 - the expectations and objectives of the placement
 - supervision arrangements
 - how performance will be assessed during the placement
- identifying the task(s) to be undertaken. These should be appropriate to the knowledge, skills and expectations of the person and the work area
- providing adequate training, information, supervision and equipment to enable the volunteer or student to carry out their agreed task(s) competently and safely
- providing appropriate and regular feedback to the person (at least weekly)
- if required by the school or tertiary institution, keeping a record of task(s) undertaken, skills used and knowledge acquired and meeting any other reporting requirements related to the placement
- scan and file any relevant documents securely in the Department's document management systems e.g. approval documents, work experience logs, correspondence and insurance details
- notifying the school or tertiary institution, where appropriate, of any concerns regarding the student immediately they become apparent

The Business Unit/Division hosting the student is responsible for any costs associated with induction.

The agreement can be varied as needed e.g. if the tasks or days/hours are changed.

5.2 Step 2 – assigning a volunteer or student to a role

Once the placement is ready to start, the manager/supervisor responsible for the day-to-day activities of the volunteer or student must complete a New Hire Part 1 in the Manager Services section of SAP HR (OneSAP users), or lodge a ticket with Shared Services via ServiceNow, and make arrangements for the volunteer or student to have access to the Department's email and intranet where required and other relevant resources e.g. shared drives (bearing in mind privacy and confidentiality requirements). Speak to your People Business Partner representative if you need assistance.

- **Step 1:** Ensure a non-establishment role exists in the unit where the employee will be working. Where a volunteer or student or non-establishment role does not

exist in the system, the manager/supervisor can request a non-establishment role to be created through MSS:

- For position creation complete a request via MSS – create Position for org unit. Instructions can be found in Service Now by searching How to create a position in SAP.
- **Step 2:** create a “New Hire Part 1” using a non-establishment role number attached to the relevant office/unit/team.
- **Step 3:** once the New Hire has been set up, the direct line manager/supervisor of where the employee is located will receive an email advising of the employees login credentials. If other specific access is required a request should be lodged in Service Now using the relevant request for access form.
- **Step 4:** the manager/supervisor can then direct the volunteer or student to online programs and training relevant to the placement, such as induction and other orientation resources.

6 Placement conditions

6.1 Duty of care for students

The school or tertiary institution has duty of care for students who are undertaking work experience.

Schools and tertiary institutions are responsible for deciding if placements are suitable, preparing students for workplace learning, monitoring the student’s progress and welfare during the placement and following up with them immediately afterwards.

Schools and tertiary institutions will also provide any paperwork that is necessary for the placement. This includes an agreement, which outlines the tasks to be undertaken, consent from the child’s parent or carers for school students, and logbook or other record of activities undertaken.

It is the responsibility of the Department to provide a safe workplace environment and appropriate supervision for the student.

6.2 Work health and safety obligations

Under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#), the Department has a legal responsibility to ensure a safe environment for everyone in the workplace, including volunteers and work experience students.

The Department has a responsibility to supervise volunteers and work experience students at all times during their placement.

Volunteers and work experience students must:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety

- take reasonable care that their conduct does not adversely affect the health and safety of others
- comply with any reasonable instruction that is given to them
- notify the relevant manager/supervisor of any health condition or other issue that might impact their ability to safely undertake the placement
- co-operate with any health and safety policy or procedure.

Additional health and safety measures may be needed for school students including flexible hours. School work experience encourages students to experience a typical working day, i.e. 7 hours however students should still be provided flexibility if needed. The manager/supervisor should discuss these arrangements with the student and the nominated contact at the student's school.

Any work related incidents must be reported by notifying the relevant manager/supervisor and calling 1800 WHS (1800 322 794) as per the relevant work health and safety worker hazard/incident management and injury notification procedures

Further advice can be obtained from your People Business Partner Representative.

6.3 What access do students have to the Department's client data and information systems

Volunteers and students on work experience can be provided with access to the Department's client or data information systems as deemed necessary or appropriate by the relevant manager/supervisor, bearing in mind the Department's privacy and confidentiality and information systems that may contain content that should not be available to people under 18 years of age.

Where full access is not considered necessary or appropriate, volunteers or students may have 'read only' access, or access in conjunction with the relevant manager/supervisor when completing tasks. Where it is decided that volunteers or students should become familiar with the Department's operating systems, they could enter information under the full supervision of the relevant manager/supervisor. Alternatively, their work could be done in MS Word, i.e. cut and pasted into a particular system by the relevant manager/supervisor, or another employee nominated by the relevant manager/supervisor.

Volunteers or students may also require access to the Department's email and intranet systems in order to gain experience in Departmental communications and to benefit from the information available on the intranet.

Volunteers and students on work experience must comply with all the Department's policies and procedures relating to privacy and confidentiality. This includes Code of Ethical Conduct, Information Security Policy, Data Privacy and Protection Policy and IT Acceptable Use Policy. A confidentiality agreement is provided at Attachment 2.

The manager/supervisor will determine access to the Department's client data and information systems for volunteers and students, the decision to allow access to systems. All volunteers and students are expected to abide by the Department's policies and procedures.

The student or the volunteer must not intentionally and/or inadvertently disseminate information to incorrect addressees. This may constitute data breaches or breaches of client confidentiality. Where this occurs the Conduct and Professional Standards Unit (CaPS) and/or the Professional Standards Branch (PSB) Corrective Services must be notified immediately.

6.4 Expenses

As these placements do not constitute a formal employment relationship, the Department does not cover any expenses incurred by volunteers or work experience students, except where this is agreed prior to the placement. For example, the Department may pay for transport and provide food if volunteers are providing assistance at an event organised by the Department or the duties they undertake require them to attend other departmental worksites.

6.5 What arrangements are in place for travel, access to motor vehicles and driving

Appropriately licensed volunteers and students may only drive a department vehicle when authorized by the relevant manager/supervisor, who must:

- sight the volunteer or student's drivers licence and ensure it is appropriate to the vehicle involved
- advise the volunteer or student that whilst the vehicle is covered by comprehensive and third party insurance, they are not covered by the Department's workers compensation insurance policy
- comply with the Departments Motor Vehicle Policy and Fleet Operating Procedures

Where driving is an essential requirement for the placement, the student or volunteer must hold the minimum Provisional 'P' Drivers Licence.

6.6 Disputes or complaint management

Complaints or disputes arising from volunteers or work experience students should be raised in the first instance with the relevant manager/supervisor.

If the matter remains unresolved, complaints may be forwarded to the delegate who approved the placement or their manager.

6.7 What happens when a placement is finished

When a volunteer or student has completed their placement, they may ask for a reference. The relevant manager/supervisor can agree to provide a reference. A sample reference letter is provided at Attachment 3.

When a volunteer has completed their placement, the relevant manager/supervisor should send them a letter to thank them for their contribution to the Department. A sample thank you letter is provided at Attachment 4. Manager/supervisor(s) must also take action to remove the volunteer or student from SAP or ELLIPSE.

7 Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the relevant manager/supervisor, volunteers and work experience students are set out in the Volunteers and Work Experience Students Policy.

8 Support and advice

Advice and support about this procedure is available from:

- your manager
- the contact at the school or tertiary institution
- your People Business Partner representative

9 Document information

Document name	Volunteers and Work Experience Students Procedure
Applies to	All Department of Communities and Justice managers/supervisors who are responsible for inducting and supervising the volunteer or work experience student while they are at the Department
Replaces	Department of Family and Community Services Volunteers and Workplace Students Procedure CSNSW Work Experience and Student Placement Policy and Guidelines
Document reference	SUB21/39005
Approval	People and Engagement Subcommittee (PESUB) 17 March 2021
Version	1.0
Commenced	17 May 2021
Due for review	16 May 2023
Policy owner	Workforce Strategy, Inclusion and Systems, People

10 Support and advice

Who can people go to if they need more advice?

Business unit	Workforce Strategy, Inclusion & Systems People, Corporate Services
Email	HRPolicyGovernance@fac.s.nsw.gov.au

Attachment 1 – Volunteer / Work Experience Student Application Form

VOLUNTEER/ WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS DETAILS				
Surname:		First Name:		
Middle Name(s):		DOB:		
Home Address:				
Email Address:				
Telephone Number:				
Mobile Number:				
Emergency Contact Name:		Telephone Number:		
		Mobile Number:		
TYPE OF TASK(S) TO BE UNDERTAKEN				
Reason(s) for seeking a placement in this area:				
Details of task(s) to be undertaken:				
Location of placement				
Division:				
Business Unit				
Address:				
Contact Person Name:				
Email Address:				
Telephone Number:		Mobile Number:		
Requested period of placement:	From:	/ /	To:	/ /

The agreement can be varied as needed e.g. if the tasks or days/hours are change.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK / NATIONAL CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK, IF APPLICABLE

Checks undertaken:

- Working With Children Check clearance details are:
 Number:Date verified by Talent Acquisition: / / Expiry date: / /
- National Criminal Record Check clearance details are:
 Number:Date verified by Talent Acquisition: / / Expiry date: / /

Signature and name of relevant manager/supervisor – results of any necessary employment screening have been checked		Date:	/ /
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND JUSTICE VOLUNTEERS/ WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Department appreciates the contribution to its work made by volunteers/ work experience students. There are some aspects of the placement of volunteers/ work experience students to the Department, which should be clear to all parties involved. These are set out below:

- There will be no monetary or material compensation for services provided by volunteers and work experience students except by agreement with the relevant manager/supervisor. If agreed document here:
- The duration of a placement is normally a finite identified period.
- Volunteers/work experience students must abide by relevant departmental policies and procedures, in particular the Departments Code of Ethical Conduct.
- A volunteer and work experience student will maintain the confidentiality of the Department’s clients as per the Department’s Privacy Policy and NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.
- A volunteer/ work experience student will be covered for death or bodily injury by the [Treasury Managed Fund – Statement of Cover \(2012\)](#) **only** during the period of placement.
- The Department should be notified if a volunteer/ work experience student wishes to conclude his or her arrangement with the Department. Alternatively, the Department has the right to end such an arrangement at any time.

SIGNATURES OF VOLUNTEER/ WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENT AND RELEVANT MANAGER/SUPERVISOR:

Signature and name of volunteer/ work experience student:		Date:	/ /
Signature and name of relevant manager/supervisor:		Date:	/ /

APPROVAL

Signature and name of delegate:		Date:	/ /
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By signing this application form the parties do not intend this to be an employment arrangement and that the Volunteer/ Work Experience Student agrees not to make any claims for wages or entitlements.

Attachment 2 - Volunteers and Work Experience Students Confidentiality Agreement

I _____¹, in consideration of the Department of Communities and Justice, admitting me as a volunteer/ work experience student in all or any programs with which it is involved at _____² or related workplaces, hereby agree that I will undertake to keep confidential all deliberations between employees of the Department, in the office I am presently placed, clients and other government and community agencies.

I acknowledge I am bound by the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, in regard to revealing or publishing any material to which I am entitled or to which I have access. If I breach such confidentiality any law, State or Commonwealth imposing sanctions on confidentiality, may bind me.

Signature of Volunteer/ Work Experience Student:

Date: ____/____/XX

Witnessed by (print name): _____

Signature of witness: _____

Date: ____/____/XX

- The volunteer/ work experience student is to retain a copy of the signed Agreement.
- The signed Agreement is to be scanned and recorded in the Department's document management systems.

¹ Name of volunteer/ work experience student

² Location of volunteer/ work experience placement

Attachment 3 – Sample reference letter

Dear Sir/Madam

It is with great pleasure that I provide this written reference for [insert name].

[insert name] participated in a number of [high-level description of tasks e.g. strategic projects and administrative tasks] during his/her time with the Department of Communities and Justice, in the [insert name of the business unit/division] for the period of [insert dates].

During this period [insert name] also performed a cross section of [description of tasks e.g. administrative tasks] including of [specific examples of tasks e.g. participation in the processing of establishment management forms and updating the state-wide database]. This required skills in [description of skills demonstrate/developed e.g. Microsoft Excel] which [insert name] performed at a [high] standard

[If relevant, add other examples of work undertaken e.g. In addition, [insert name] assisted the Policy and Project Officers by researching key information required on the website, project tasks and liaised with other government agencies. [insert name] also had the opportunity to work closely with senior staff in People Directorate, Corporate Services Division. This required sound investigation, communication and high-level interpersonal skills.]

[insert name] was always courteous, punctual and enthusiastic during his/her experience with the Department.

During [insert name]’s experience, I found [insert name] to be [insert description e.g. a bright, enthusiastic and intelligent young man/woman who is reliable]. In addition [insert name] is [insert additional description of qualities e.g. an excellent team member and displayed a keen interest to learn different tasks.]

To any prospective employer, I have no hesitation in recommending [insert name] for any position that would utilise his/her knowledge and skills.

I would be more than happy to elaborate further on [insert name]’s skills and abilities if required. Please do not hesitate to contact me on [phone number].

Yours sincerely

[insert name]

[insert title, business unit/division]

[insert date]

Attachment 4 – Sample thank you letter

[DATE]

[NAME]

[ADDRESS]

Dear [NAME]:

On behalf of the Department of Communities and Justice, I would like to personally thank you for your recent contribution of time to the [EVENT/PROJECT]. This [EVENT/PROJECT] could not have been a success without the help of you and the many other volunteers who donated their time.

[USE NEXT PARAGRAPH OR TWO TO HIGHLIGHT SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS, SUCH AS NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS, NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED, ETC. CONSIDER THANKING PARTICULAR PEOPLE BY NAME, SUCH AS THOSE WHO VOLUNTEERED THE MOST TIME.]

Once again, the Department of Communities and Justice thanks you for your efforts and contribution of time.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[TITLE]