# Professional Experience

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### School of Education

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## Introduction

Pre-Service Teachers (PSTs) are required to undertake Professional Experience as it is a significant and integral part of the teacher education programs at Federation University Australia.

Professional Experience connects and extends the coursework undertaken by PSTs by providing practical and constructive experiences within education settings. It also enables professional educators to make a substantial contribution to the development of future educators.

Professional experience placement requirements vary between programs. However, in most cases, PSTs will complete between 60-105 placement days over the duration of their program.

Under the supervision and guidance of a Mentor Teacher (MT) or Educator, PSTs will plan, deliver and evaluate lessons and activities in a classroom environment. PSTs will develop skills and relevant curriculum knowledge to prepare, implement and assess learning experiences in a range of settings from primary schools, secondary schools, early childhood settings and ‘diverse’ educational settings throughout their program.

### Pre-placement

1. **Are there any circumstances in which I could gain credit against for Professional Experience placement?**

   If you have experience volunteering in education settings, it is unlikely that this can be credited against placements. However previous placements undertaken at another Higher Education institution may be considered as could previous teaching experience. Discuss this matter with your Program Leader.

2. **When will I undertake my Professional Experience Placements?**

   Each professional experience placement you will undertake is scheduled in the academic calendar which is published on the FedUni School of Education Professional Experience webpage. View your program placement block/s on [https://federation.edu.au/schools/school-of-education/professional-experience](https://federation.edu.au/schools/school-of-education/professional-experience)
3. If I have commitments such as work/children/travel/holidays booked, can I vary my placement dates?

The placement dates are fixed and cannot be altered except under exceptional circumstances. While the majority of PSTs work / have ongoing commitments, these are not considered as exceptional circumstances.

It is expected that you make the necessary arrangements for all other commitments, prior to commencing your scheduled placement blocks.

4. Can I undertake placement where I work? Can I be paid while undertaking placement?

No, PSTs cannot complete placement in educational settings where they currently work, have previously worked, have relatives or children attend or any other perceived conflict of interest (eg. Volunteer work). As per the guidelines of the accrediting bodies (VIT, ACECQA), undertaking placement is unpaid.

5. I would like to complete a rural placement. Is there any funding available to support me to do this?

Teacher Rural Placement Grants are available for eligible students, who must be in their 3rd or final year of a Bachelor of Education Program: https://federation.edu.au/current-students/assistance-support-and-services/scholarships/grants/kickstart-placement-grant

6. What do I need to do prior to my placement being organised?

It is a requirement of FedUni, that on InPlace, you:
- complete the Student Placement Agreement, and
- apply for and pass the Working With Children Check (WWCC)
- note, by second year, your primary and /or secondary specialisation.

Information about these requirements is located in the Pre-Placement section of the Professional Experience Moodle Shell.

Professional Experience placement details will not be confirmed until these processes are successfully completed.

Note that many Early Childhood settings, in addition to the above, also require a Police Check before the PST can commence placement. You will be advised, via InPlace, if this affects your EC placement.

7. How is my placement organised?

All placements are arranged by the Professional Experience team. The appropriate way to make contact is to email the team on sea.professionalexperience@federation.edu.au
Professional Experience team members are located at Mt Helen and Berwick as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Room</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mt Helen</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>204a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwick</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>131, Level 1</td>
</tr>
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Prior to the upcoming year, you will be asked to:
- check all details on InPlace are correct, and
- indicate the areas in which you have accommodation available (in Victoria).

Note you must complete this information by the deadline or your placement may be rescheduled to the next available placement block (normally in the following year).
You will receive information about your upcoming placement/s in your classes and via Moodle / InPlace.

8. Where will I be placed?

The Professional Experience office will attempt to place you in areas that, you have advised on InPlace, you have access to accommodation.

It is extremely difficult to secure placements for all PSTs so you may need to travel. Therefore PSTs can be expected to travel up to 100kms / a 1 hour drive from their place of residence or areas nominated on InPlace.

9. What happens if I don’t submit any details for placement or if my details are submitted past the due date?

If you do not submit your details on InPlace, the Professional Experience Office will automatically place you in a suitable organisation. The placement will be within a reasonable distance from your home address as listed on Campus Solutions.

If details are submitted past the due date, we may still consider your preferences. However, if we have already confirmed or progressed with the arrangement of your placement, we may not be able to accommodate any changes.

10. Can I arrange my own placement?

No, you cannot arrange your own placement. However you do have the opportunity to request, via InPlace, areas where you would be interested in undertaking your placements.

11. How do I find out about my Professional Experience Placement?

The Professional Experience staff will post the placement details on InPlace. This usually occurs three school weeks prior to the commencement of your placement. Information will be updated regularly as placements are confirmed.
12. What do I need to do once I know my placement details?

Once your placement details and the contact details of your FedUni mentor have been confirmed, you need to make contact with both your:

- School or Centre Coordinator to discuss your placement requirements and arrange a visit if necessary, and
- FedUni Mentor via email address or InPlace.

13. What if I get a placement I don't like or can't get to?

Once your placement allocation is confirmed, this cannot be changed. If you are experiencing extreme hardship, contact sea.professionalexperience@federation.edu.au or Student Support Services.

14. Do I need a FedUni name badge to wear on placement?

A name badge is not compulsory however, it may be a useful part of your Professional Experience dress.

If you wish to wear a FedUni name badge, it may be purchased online from the FedUni Store. Note that collection / delivery can be up to 21 days turnaround from when the order is placed. Go to https://fedunistore.federation.edu.au/collections/accessories/products/name-badge

During placement

It is a requirement that prior to graduation from a teacher education higher education program, a PST must complete the required number of days specified for the placement for each Professional Experience course undertaken in their program and must pass each of these placements.

1. What happens if there is a Public Holiday while I am on placement?

If the school or centre is closed for a Public Holiday during placement then it is the PST’s responsibility to negotiate a make-up day/s with their MT/School PST Coordinator to be completed immediately before or after the block.

When this situation occurs, you are required to advise the University Mentor.

2. What happens if I miss a day of placement?

If you are ill or have to miss a day because of extenuating personal circumstances during placement, it is your responsibility to negotiate a make-up day/s to be completed as soon as possible. On these occasions, you must also advise the University by noting on Assessment Report (Form A).
3. Who should I contact if I have difficulties whilst on placement?

If you have any difficulties whilst on placement you need to contact your allocated University Mentor (UM), who is a FedUni staff member who will make contact with you during placement to discuss your progress and assist with any issues. Note that the role of your UM differs to that of your MT, in that the UM does not assess you on placement.

4. Can I go interstate or overseas to do my placement?

Interstate
You can request to complete a placement interstate by completing a Variation Request form available upon request via sea.professionalexperience@federation.edu.au.

If you are undertaking a Diversity Placement, normally occurring during the 3rd year of a Program, you will not need to complete the Variation Request form.

Overseas
Completing an overseas placement is one option for PSTs when completing a Diversity Placement. FedUni has developed partnership arrangements. Currently FedUni has partnerships with schools in Cambodia, China (three locations), Nepal, New Zealand, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

5. Will I get financial assistance?

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides some financial incentive to PSTs. There are specific requirements relating to students eligibility to apply for the Pre-Service Teacher Practicum Scheme (specific Victorian Government schools only). Relevant information can be found in the Professional Experience Moodle Shell under the ‘Pre-Placement’ section.

FedUni also has KickStart placement grants which you may be eligible for. To register, you will need to complete the KickStart Registration form (if you haven’t already) at: http://federation.edu.au/current-students/starting-at-feduni/scholarships/how-to-register. This is a once only application that will enable you to be considered for grants and bursaries for the duration of your program.

If you are experiencing financial hardship while studying, FedUni has a Student Financial Support Officer to assist students. For more information, go to Financial information and support.

Post placement

1. What forms need to be submitted at the end of placements?

There are three Professional Experience forms to be submitted after your placements:

- Form A – Professional Experience Assessment Report (all placements) (PST and school)
2. **Where do I submit my completed forms (Assessment Report, PST Learning Log and Reflective Self-Evaluation) and when do I have to submit them?**

**Where?** Upload scanned *not a photo due to clarity issue* original copies of placement Forms A and B (all placements) plus Form C (in 3rd and 4th years) to InPlace


**When?** It is the PST’s responsibility to upload the required forms to InPlace no later than 1 week after completing each placement.

Note: PSTs must keep a copy of all of submitted Report Forms for their own records.

3. **What happens if I've failed my placement or not successfully completed my placement?**

Contact your University Mentor to discuss the situation.

Any PST who fails a placement will be required to meet with appropriate staff to plan a support program for ongoing learning. This may involve re-enrolling in the Course.

At FedUni, we have a process to intervene when you are having difficulties while on placement – the Student At Risk (StAR) Procedure. If you are experiencing issues that are impacting on your ability to successfully continue or complete your placement, advise your FedUni University Mentor as soon as possible so that assistance through the StAR Procedure may be initiated.

4. **I can't upload my Placement Forms to InPlace. What should I do?**

Go to the InPlace Student Guide located in the [Professional Experience Moodle Shell](#).

If you cannot resolve the issue from suggestions in this Guide, contact the FedUni IT Support 1800 FED UNI (1800 333 864) or [https://federation.service-now.com/sp](https://federation.service-now.com/sp) for further assistance.