

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 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 Federation School of Education Professional Experience webpage. View your program placement block/s on <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 Federation, that on InPlace, that you:

(a) must upload the following pre-placement documents:

- i. signed **Student Placement Agreement**
- ii. signed **Consent Form: Hold and Release Student Information**
- iii. current **Working With Children Check (WWCC) card**;

(b) complete the **Medical Declaration Survey**;

(c) answer preplacement question relating to **Accommodation** options;

(d) list your Teaching Specialisation/s (primary and /or secondary specialisations) when you enrol for second year.

Information about these requirements is located in 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 and published in InPlace. 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:

Campus	Building	Room
Mt Helen	T	204a
Berwick	903	Student HQ

Prior to the upcoming year, you will be asked to:

- check that all details, both in MyStudent Centre and InPlace, are correct, and if not, update these
- indicate the areas in which you have accommodation available.

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 through InPlace, via email from the Professional Experience Team, in your classes and via Moodle.

7a. Can I use my personal email address to communicate with the Professional Experience team?

No, you may not use your personal email address to communicate with the Professional Experience team.

Students must use the ‘student email account’ created for them by Federation University for all correspondence with the University and the Professional Experience team.

Students are strongly advised to check their student email account on a regular basis.

When emailing the Professional Experience team, the subject line should include your Student ID Number, Program Code and Course Code. For example: ID_30333333_TX5_EDBED1016

8. Where will I be placed?

The Professional Experience office will attempt to place you:

- within areas up to one hour's drive/100 kilometres or public transport from your residential address;
- within a reasonable distance from areas, which you noted in InPlace, that you have access to accommodation.

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 for placement 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 Federation University Mentor have been confirmed, you need to make contact with both you:

- School or Centre Coordinator to discuss your placement requirements and arrange a visit if necessary, and
- Federation University 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. Can I go interstate or overseas to do my placement?

Interstate

Each request is considered on an individual basis. PSTs are required to research interstate school term dates, equivalent WWCC requirements and organise their own travel and accommodation.

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 an option for PSTs when completing a Diversity Placement. Federation students have participated in placements at schools in the UK, Nepal, China, Germany, New Zealand and Vietnam in previous years.

15. 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.

Federation 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, Federation has a Student Financial Support Officer to assist students. For more information, go to [Financial information and support](#).

16. Do I need a Federation University 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 Federation 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. The negotiated make-up day/s must be clearly recorded on the front page of your Assessment Report (Form A).

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 Federation staff member who will make contact with you during placement to discuss your progress and assist with any issues.

Federation has 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 Federation University Mentor as soon as possible so that assistance through the StAR Procedure may be initiated.

Note that the role of your UM differs to that of your MT, in that the UM does not assess you on placement.

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*)
- Form B – Professional Experience PST Learning Log (all placements) (*PST*)
- Form C – Reflective Self-Evaluation Report (*3rd and 4th year placements only*) (*PST*).

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 to InPlace scanned (*not a photo due to clarity issue*) original copies of placement Forms A and B (all placements) and Form C (for 3rd and 4th year placements).

<https://inplace.federation.edu.au/default.aspx>

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.

As already noted on page 3, at Federation, 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 Federation University Mentor as soon as possible so that assistance through the StAR Procedure may be initiated.

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.

4. If 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 Federation, IT Support 1800 FED UNI (1800 333 864) or <https://federation.service-now.com/sp> for further assistance.