

Guidance for Staff on Placement Learning

1. Background

1.1 This Guidance accompanies the [Policy for Placement Learning](#) and must be read in conjunction with it.

2. Procedure

2.1 The Guidance provides a set of arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement of placement learning and outlines the minimum requirements that Schools, Placements Providers and students must meet.

3. Responsibilities of the School (or office within the University that manages the placement)

3.1 Before the start of the placement

Assessment

- a) Ensure that, where appropriate, assessment procedures (including how the placement fits into the credit rating of the programme) are clear, conform to the overall assessment strategy of the programme and are in line with quality assurance requirements. Details of the credit rating and assessment procedures of the placement should be decided upon during the approval of the programme and clearly set out in the approval documentation, programme specification and handbooks. Schools whose students participate in a credit-bearing academic placement abroad should refer to the [University's Framework for Credit Transfer](#).
- b) Make students aware of the consequences of failure to complete a placement and how this may affect their progression, including details of the possibility of re-sits, re-assessment, and compensation of marks.

Sourcing Placement Opportunities

- c) Support students in finding an appropriate placement to achieve the learning outcomes. Where students arrange their own placements, provide them with clear criteria for the approval of placements and stipulate a process for reaching a decision on the suitability of these.
- d) Ensure that Placement Providers are able to provide both the intended learning outcomes and to fulfil their responsibilities as required. Schools should provide Placement Providers with appropriate and timely information prior to, during and following the students' placement. In the case of self-arranged placements, these must be approved by the School and a Tripartite Agreement or similar should be signed by all three parties.

Safety and Legal Matters

- e) Undertake an appropriate risk assessment process for the placement to identify, and determine appropriate mitigation for, any possible health and safety considerations prior to a student commencing placement.
- f) Undertake, if required, a site visit to a proposed Placement Provider (this will be dependent on the nature of the relationship with the Provider). For international placements, reference should be made to the [New International Mobility Partnership processes and Self-arranged International Work Placement Approval Process](#). For UK placements, reference should be made to the [UCEA Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Students 2009](#).

- g) Ensure that, if relevant to the placement, any statutory checks are carried out prior to a placement being undertaken. For example, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or vetting checks for students whose placements involve interacting with children, young people or vulnerable adults. If students are responsible for having the checks carried out themselves, Schools must nevertheless ensure that they are completed before the start of the placement.
- h) Ensure that policies in relation to equality and diversity and diversity and work/training are in place unless, as may be the case in some countries outside of the UK, these contravene the local laws of the placement location.
- i) Ensure the Placement Provider has its own risk assessment documentation in relation to health and safety, insurance, and due diligence.

Communications with Students and Placement Providers

- j) Make students aware of the practical and professional requirements, including breach of contract, of the placement provider and, if relevant, the cultural life of the host country.
- k) Have plans in place for communication with students during their placement period, including name and contact details for a member of staff within the School, staff visits to students on placement, if appropriate; and the use of My Placement, My Manchester or other appropriate tools to aid communication between the School and the student and to provide support for teaching and learning. For international placements, Schools should follow the [Guidance on Monitoring the Attendance and Wellbeing of Undergraduate Students Abroad](#).
- l) Provide students with information regarding the level and amount of guidance and support available to them while on placement, how they can access it, who will be providing it, the frequency with which such support may be available.
- m) Provide a full pre-departure briefing to students on international placements, including emergency contacts and advice concerning accommodation, financial arrangements, travel and immigration.
- n) Provide opportunities for students to declare pre-existing conditions to ensure fitness to travel.
- o) Ensure students and Placement Providers know how to deal with queries, or raise concerns or complaints with the School, or report any other difficulties they might experience during the placement.
- p) Complete the [Approval to Travel process](#) for students on international placements.

3.2 During the placement

- a) Monitor the progress of students on placement in line with the School's usual procedures and provide ongoing support throughout.
- b) Have a *minimum* of two face to face (in person or via Zoom or equivalent) contacts with students during the course of a semester/year-long long UK based placement. The first contact should take place within the first weeks of the placement, the second formal contact should take place at a mid-way point to discuss any assessment that may be required as part of the process and to discuss academic issues pertaining to the students' return to the University. The minimum number of formal contact points is greater for students on a placement abroad. Please refer to the ['Monitoring and Attendance and Wellbeing of UG students abroad'](#) guidance.
- c) Visit all students who are placed at a high-risk partnership or destination. In the case of high-risk self-arranged international work placements taking place for three months or longer where it is not practical to travel to the placement destination, Schools should undertake a 'virtual pastoral visit' using Zoom or any other video conferencing tool (or by telephone where internet access is poor.) The [Formal Pastoral Visit Report Form](#) should be used.
- d) Ensure that any relevant safeguarding requirements relating to staff members are adhered to. For example, advise staff who carry out placements visits about Disclosure and Barring

Service (DBS) requirements or staff members needing to carry University identification when they visit Placement Providers.

- e) Report any emergency incident relating to an overseas placement to the International Programmes Office by following the guidance provided in the [International Emergency Management Plan](#).

3.3 After the placement

- a) Have mechanisms in place to check that placements are completed satisfactorily, and methods of providing feedback after completion of the placement (to and from the Placement Provider and the student) should be made clear.
- b) Have procedures in place for monitoring and reviewing placements to ensure that they remain effective. For international placements, see the [International Mobility Partnership Review Form](#).
- c) Provide students with advice and support to facilitate the re-orientation of students upon their return to the University of Manchester, if appropriate.
- d) Debrief the student on completion of the Placement.
- e) Maintain a list of approved Placement Providers and undertake review of regular providers.

4. Responsibilities of the Placement Provider

4.1 Before the start of the placement

- a) Agree on the content of the placement (such as a job description, module choices or content of the research project).
- b) Determine a main contact for the placement: mentor/supervisor/central or departmental exchange advisor.

4.2 During the placement

- a) Provide the student with a full and clear induction, including health and safety arrangements, fire precautions, emergency evacuation arrangements and all local information relevant to the students' placement.
- b) Provide the student with information in relation to the steps they should take, and which policies and procedures will apply, if they have any concerns or complaints in relation to aspects of their placement. In the event that such concerns are raised during the placement, work with the student to alert the University as appropriate to the nature of the concern(s)/complaint(s) and the steps which are being taken to consider/address them.
- c) Ensure that, if required, they instruct the student to sign a confidentiality agreement and undertake to comply with the terms of it.
- d) Ensure that, wherever possible and within the local context, reasonable adjustments are made for a student with known disabilities and/or special educational needs.
- e) Monitor the student's progress on placement and provide ongoing support throughout.
- f) Maintain communication with the University during the placement period, including on issues relating to the student's attendance or performance, in particular if a student is operating below their required performance levels, or in case of breach of discipline by the student.
- g) Inform the University at the earliest opportunity if a student has an unnotified absence from placement.
- h) Notify the University of any health and safety related incidents involving the student subject to meeting the requirements of local data protection laws.
- i) Assist the University with any information about the placements of overseas students as required by UK immigration authorities.
- j) Co-operate with the University to meet the requirements of the student's academic programme such as the need for assessment and feedback.

4.3 After the placement

- k) On completion of the placement, provide feedback to the University as agreed at the outset (such as a transcript of records, a testimonial or reference).

5. Responsibilities of the Student

5.1 Before the start of the placement

- a) Ensure they are clear about assessment procedures, including how the placement fits into the credit rating of their programme.
- b) Be aware of the consequences of failure to complete a placement and how this may affect their progression, including details of the possibility of re-sits, re-assessment, and compensation of marks.
- c) Follow the criteria provided by the School for the approval of placements where these are found by the students themselves, and adhere to the process for reaching a decision on the suitability of placements.
- d) Familiarise themselves with the practical and professional requirements, including breach of contract, of the placement provider and, if relevant, the cultural life of the host country.
- e) Ensure they know who to communicate with at the University during their placement period, including name and contact details for a member of staff, and how to access appropriate tools to aid communication with the School and wider University.
- f) Familiarise themselves with information provided to them by the School regarding the level and amount of guidance and support available to them while on placement, how they can access it, who will be providing it, the frequency with which such support may be available.
- g) Ensure they know how to deal with queries, or raise concerns or complaints with the School, or report any other difficulties they might experience during the placement.
- h) Attend any pre-departure sessions and ensure that information provided by the Placement Organiser and the Placement Provider is understood.
- i) Ensure that, in the case of participation in a placement abroad, they have a valid passport and visa for their destination and their return to the UK.
- j) Source any additional insurance required over and above the standard University insurance.
- k) Seek any relevant advice from their own GP in relation to immunisations and health issues.
- l) Declare, wherever possible, to the University any condition they may have so that appropriate support can be provided.
- m) Ensure that, where required, they have completed Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or vetting checks before the start of the placement
- n) Ensure that all documentation which requires their input is submitted by the required deadline.

5.2 During the placement

- o) Remember that they remain registered University of Manchester students and must conduct themselves accordingly and with due regard to the University's requirements and regulations and must adhere to the [University's Conduct and Discipline of Students \(Regulations XVII\)](#) and any relevant School or Faculty specific policies.
- p) Adhere to the laws and conventions of the country in which the placement is based.
- q) Adhere to the Placement Provider's policies concerning equality, diversity, and dignity at work or study.
- r) Ensure, in the case of a work placement, that they meet the norms and expectations for professional conduct in the particular area of work they are undertaking; for example, students on health-related practice must conduct themselves and practice within an ethical framework and with regard to confidentiality.
- s) Abide by the rules and regulations of the Placement provider, including university regulations, working hours, code of conduct, rules of confidentiality and social media policy.

- t) Be fully aware of the health and safety aspects of the placement and comply with all guidance issued by the Placements Organiser and the Placement Provider.
- u) Ensure they retain contact with their Placement Organiser during their placement and direct any concerns or queries they have during the placement to the relevant contact person within their School or the relevant University office.
- v) Complete all requirements (academic or professional) as stipulated by their Placements Organiser.
- w) Comply with any Tier 4 visa requirements as detailed by the University (or UKVI).

5.3 After the placement

- x) Provide feedback on their experience and be pro-active in integrating their learning from the placement with their academic studies.
- y) Help to prepare the next cohort of students for their participation in a placement.

Further Information and Resources

Careers Service

The Careers Service's placement team provides a range of support for undergraduate students as they prepare for and undertake their search for an industrial or professional placement year. Offering subject/school-based placement talks, tailored feedback on applications and a range of placement specific advice and events, the team also work closely with recruiters to develop placement opportunities for our students, and gain insight into the placement recruitment market.

Partnering with schools and faculties to support existing and new placement programmes, the specialist placement team's support compliments the wider services available for students from the Careers Service including: our vacancy and events system [CareerConnect](#), (used by 100s of top placement employers), CV advice and support (including 24/7 [CareerSet CV checker](#)), [psychometric test practice](#) and interview practice simulations ([including video](#)). The Careers Service also runs regular careers fairs and employability events for students of all year groups and disciplines.

More information is available for staff members at:

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/supporting-students/careers/>

More information is available for students at:

<https://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/placement/>

International Programmes Office

The International Programmes Office provides Schools and students with information and support for overseas placements, including: guidance on selecting and approving partner universities/organisations, pre-departure briefings and resources, distribution of funding, and emergency support and co-ordination.

Further information is available from:

<https://xorg.manchester.ac.uk/sites/sra/IPO/Pages/The-International-Programmes-Office.aspx>

<http://www.goabroad.manchester.ac.uk/>

University's Insurance Office

For further information about insurance issues relating to student placements:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/insurance/>

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/insurance/>

QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education:

Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality – Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others:

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/revised-uk-quality-code-for-higher-education.pdf?sfvrsn=4c19f781_8<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>

UCEA Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Students 2009:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=15611>

<http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/publications/index.cfm/HSplace>

ASET Good Practice Guide for Health and Safety for Student Placements

<http://www.asetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/e-ASET-Health-Safety-for-Student-Placements-2016.pdf>

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Lead contact:	Teaching and Learning Manager (Policy), Division of SAS <i>For any queries or questions relating to this document, please direct your email to teaching-policy@manchester.ac.uk</i>

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