

University Policy on: Courses - Experiential Learning

Purpose of the policy and summary of issues it addresses:

This policy sets out the principles for managing student engagement with educational activities that provide a meaningful learning experience within a unit or a course. These activities are purposefully designed, wholly or partially, to achieve explicit educational outcomes in collaboration with workplace, community partners and/or research end-users. It covers all forms of experiential learning activities in the University's courses including community-engagement (service learning), work-integrated learning (such as professional experience placements, internships, and industry projects), professional mentoring and research end-user engagement.

Within the context of maintaining the University's reputation as a university of the highest international standing the aims of this policy are to:

- facilitate a coordinated approach to experiential learning with a view to it becoming an integral part of the University's courses, where relevant;
- provide explicit standards for experiential learning;
- provide procedures to ensure risks are identified and managed; and
- ensure that experiential learning meets its objectives.

This policy applies to all courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and higher degree by research courses at the University. Unless otherwise approved by the University, any activity undertaken by students that is not part of the approved curriculum for a course or a unit falls outside the scope of this policy.

Definitions:

In this policy and any associated procedures, the **University** means The University of Western Australia

experiential learning refers to those structured learning activities involving a host organisation externally or arrangements organised locally on campus which are undertaken either: for assessment and credit towards a UWA undergraduate/postgraduate coursework course, or for course completion or by higher degree research students as part of a research end-user engagement.

relevant board(s) means a Board of the University relevant to the case in point. The relevant board(s) may include a position or a body of people with authority to carry out the function concerned

community benefit sector refers to not-for-profit organisations, Government agencies or other companies which have advancing the welfare of the community as their primary purpose

a **Graduate Research Program** is a formal research training curriculum that has been approved by the Academic Council on the recommendation of the Board of the Graduate Research School. The curriculum includes the execution of a research project and preparation of a thesis, plus coursework, industry placement and/or other elements as may be appropriate

HDR means a higher degree by research which is a AQF Level 10 Research Doctorate or AQF Level 9 Research Masters course for which at least two-thirds of the student load for the course is required as research work, as defined in the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017

inherent requirements refer to abilities, knowledge and skills needed to successfully undertake and complete an experiential learning activity comprising a professional/industry practice placement

a **placement** refers to an organised and supervised experiential learning activity that takes place on or off campus as part of the University course requirements, the site of such activity is a placement under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. The placement takes the form of

work placements, practical placements, clinical placement, professional placements, internships or practicums

research means Research and Experimental Development as defined in the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017

reasonable adjustments is defined as a process to help students with disability to minimise the impact of certain adverse and unforeseen circumstances on their progression and performance in units/course of study. For the purpose of this policy, an adjustment is defined as reasonable if it achieves the purpose of an experiential learning activity while balancing the interests of all persons affected, including the student, the University and its staff, the partner organisation and its staff, and other students

research end-user refers to any external organisation including businesses, governments, non-governmental organisations, communities and community organisations engaged by higher degree by research (HDR) students as part of their HDR training. Other higher education providers and organisations that are affiliates, or subsidiaries of a university are excluded

research internships means a temporary position with a research end-user where a HDR student has undertaken Research and Development (R&D) related to their field(s) of research. A research internship must be for a period of at least 30 days, can be either paid or unpaid, and can form part of the enrolment or be undertaken during an HDR period of suspension

service learning refers to community engagement activities that are embedded in units of study, being structured and assessed as formal educational experiences

work integrated learning (WIL) means an educational experience that enables students to learn through industry- engaged authentic and reflective activities that are intentional and recognized by the University in order to achieve learning outcomes that are both transferrable and applied.

Policy statement:

1 General principles

- 1.1 The University values experiential learning by:
 - a) integrating it into broader learning experiences directed towards enhancing the student learning experience and life-long learning;
 - b) supporting the achievement of work readiness and graduate employability;
 - c) designing learning activities that provide benefits to all stakeholders including students, the community, industries, professional entities, research end-users, and the University;
 - d) providing opportunity for all students to access experiential learning during the course of their studies;
 - e) actively encouraging staff to develop and maintain sustainable relationships at all levels with industry, community organisations and other external professional partners;
 - f) expecting academic staff to consider incorporating experiential learning into units/courses, where appropriate.
- 1.2 Experiential learning in the University's units/courses may be, but not limited to:
 - a) community service-oriented (service learning) by way of:
 - i. developing an ethical sense of social responsibility in students;
 - ii. advancing equity and social justice in the community; and
 - iii. enhancing the University's reputation for good citizenship and public spirited leadership.
 - b) work-integrated learning for developing competencies for professional/industry practice placement by way of:

- i. integrating knowledge and theory into professional practical industry experiences (such as clinical placements, practice placements and teaching professional experience);
 - ii. providing students with an awareness of workplace culture and expectations and deeper understanding of their chosen profession;
 - iii. enabling students to gain awareness of the requirements of global industry and an insight into their own strengths and aptitudes; and
 - iv. developing industry contacts and access to potential future employers;
- c) a mentorship program which provides students with opportunities to establish and develop mentoring relationships;
 - d) learning based in simulated workplace settings and virtual business environments as part of a course or unit requirements; and
 - e) research-oriented for enabling students to engage with research-end users (research end-user engagement) in their local communities, research centres and industry by making social, research, technical and/or educational contributions (see section 3);
- 1.3 Experiential learning in the University's units/courses may be:
- a) initiated by the student and approved by the unit/course coordinator to meet course and/or accreditation requirements (e.g. zero credit point Engineering Portfolio to meet accreditation requirements);
 - b) purpose designed as part of the curriculum by the course/unit coordinator

2 Structured Experiential Learning in Coursework Courses

2.1 Curriculum design and pedagogy

- 2.1.1 A structured experiential learning activity in coursework courses (undergraduate and postgraduate) must meet the following criteria:
- a) is integrated into the formal course or units so as to build on a student's theoretical learning or integrates students' participation in a real-world service experience with guided curriculum-embedded reflection on that experience;
 - b) is explicitly indicated in the approved unit outline, specified learning outcomes and assessment details;
 - c) requires students to undertake work that combines academic rigour with practical relevance and is integrated as part or all of their assessment for the unit;
 - d) specifies any inherent requirement that students must meet before a professional/industry practice placement; and
 - e) may be optional within a unit/course; may be required of all students undertaking the unit/course; or may be required as part of professional registration requirements on course completion.
- 2.1.2 The total hours expected of students undertaking placements must be explicitly stated in the curriculum proposal and in the unit outline, where relevant.
- 2.1.3 The Curriculum Committee has authority to approve the experiential learning aspect of an undergraduate or postgraduate coursework unit, where it fulfils the criteria referred to in 2.1.1.
- 2.1.4 Approval for an existing experiential learning unit or the experiential learning aspect of a unit within a coursework course must be obtained from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) in an event where the partnership agreements between the University and the host organisation have changed.
- 2.1.5 Opportunities for experiential learning must be identified during curriculum review at the course and unit levels.

Procedure

1. Approval of Experiential Learning activity units

1.1 Where a unit/course meets the requirements of an experiential learning activity the Unit/Course Coordinator must provide the following information ([relevant forms are available at this link](#)):

- (a) Unit Code;
- (b) Unit Title;
- (c) a description of the experiential learning activity that the unit includes, accompanied by a brief justification as to how it delivers the outcomes of the unit;
- (d) whether the experiential learning activity component is optional within the unit, or required of all students undertaking the unit; and
- (e) a description detailing how the experiential learning activity is assessed.

1.2 The approval process for proposed experiential learning activity units (for coursework and HDR) is outlined in the [flowchart](#).

2.2 Supervision, Assessment and Feedback

2.2.1 The assessment of a student's work in relation to experiential learning within a coursework course is the responsibility of the unit/course coordinator and must be in accordance with [University Policy on Assessment \(UP15/5\)](#).

2.2.2 Experiential learning activities must not restrict the University's capacity to assess the student's learning outcomes.

2.2.3 The provision of appropriate feedback on summative assessments for experiential learning activities must occur in accordance with the University Policy on Assessment. In particular,

- a) formal performance feedback must be provided to students in a timely manner throughout the placement;
- b) students are responsible for seeking feedback on an ongoing basis and communicating any problems relating to their placement to the Unit/course coordinator; and
- c) the unit/course coordinator must ensure that there is periodic on-site or electronic contact with a student in the workplace and that formal feedback is obtained from the host organisation and recorded.

2.2.4 A supervisor from a host organisation may provide advice/feedback regarding a student's work in relation to service oriented experiential learning activity (service learning) or work-integrated experiential learning activity.

2.3 Recognition of prior learning (RPL) in Coursework Courses

2.3.1 Where relevant, students who possess previously acquired learning that equates to the stipulated learning outcomes of the specified work-integrated learning activity may apply for recognition and accreditation in accordance with the [University Policy on Credit Transfer, Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning \(UP 11/34\)](#).

2.3.2 Recognition of prior learning has no application in respect of service-oriented experiential learning activity, in particular service learning placements.

3 Experiential learning in HDR Courses

3.1 For HDR students enrolled in courses that include no structured coursework component, engagement in experiential learning activities may be either optional or mandated in the curriculum of a Graduate Research Program.

3.2 Where the activity is mandated as part of a Graduate Research Program it may be required as a condition of completion of the Program, but it does not form part of the assessment of the course and does not attract "credit".

- 3.3 Experiential learning activities may be ad hoc or part of an established internship program, and in either case opportunities for engagement may be identified by the student or supervisors.
- 3.4 The conditions under which students enrolled in any HDR course (doctorate or masters by research) undertaking experiential learning activities are outlined in Schedule A
- 3.5 Where there is a structured coursework component to an HDR course (for example in a doctorate or master by research and coursework), experiential learning activities may be codified in the coursework component of the course. In such cases, the sections of this policy relating to coursework apply.
- 3.6 The Board of the Graduate Research School or nominee has authority to approve the experiential learning component in a HDR course or a Graduate Research Program for an individual student.
- 3.7 Approval for an existing experiential learning arrangement that pre-dates this policy must be obtained from the Dean of Graduate Research School in an event where the partnership agreements between the University and the research end-user have changed.

4 Agreement with the host organisation/research end-user

- 4.1 All structured and purpose designed experiential learning activities must include a customised formal agreement between the relevant host organisation / research end-user and the University.
- 4.2 The customised formal agreement must address issues which include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a) risk identification and management, including, but not limited to, duty of care to students, occupational health and safety, wellbeing, and police clearances (risk assessments for experiential learning undertaken offshore/overseas must be undertaken in accordance with the [University Policy on International Student Mobility \(Outbound \(UP16/4\)\)](#));
 - b) responsibility in relation to any costs, which must comply where relevant with the [University Policy on Incidental Student Fees and Charges \(UP07/20\)](#);
 - c) skills and maturity of students;
 - d) access to support for students on site during their placement;
 - e) induction and supervision;
 - f) intellectual property which must comply with the University Policy on Intellectual Property;
 - g) length of the agreement and review;
 - h) insurance covered by the University for students on placement;
 - i) [complaints](#) and [appeals](#), which must be in accordance with the University's policies.
- 4.3 Where relevant, a student initiated experiential learning activity must normally include the formulation of a customised formal agreement.
- 4.4 The customised formal agreement must be developed and signed by an authorised person from the host organisation and an authorised person from the University.

- 4.5 For coursework courses the development of a customised formal agreement must take place after formal approval of an experiential learning unit or a unit comprising an experiential learning component.
- 4.6 Where an agreement has been developed for a student undertaking an experiential learning, it must be placed in the student's file.
- 4.7 The customised formal agreement must be in place prior to teaching the experiential learning unit or the unit comprising an experiential learning component, or in the case of HDR students prior to commencement of their engagement with the research-end user.
- 4.8 For approved experiential learning units/courses in existence prior to the commencement of this policy, where no customised formal agreement exists or the existing agreement does not address the issues referred to in 4.2, a formal agreement must be developed or the existing agreement modified within three months of approval of this policy.

<p>Procedure</p> <p>2. Development of a customised formal agreement</p> <p>2.1 Unit/course coordinator/relevant officer of the University identifies relevant host organisation and initiates dialogue.</p> <p>2.2 Unit/course coordinator negotiates terms of agreement for the student placement with host organisation that may host the experiential learning activity.</p> <p>2.3 Unit/course coordinator/relevant officer of the University must undertake reasonable and appropriate due diligence (e.g. culture of the host organisation, quality of the student experience, and etc.) on a proposed host organisation before any placement is undertaken, and liaises with UWA Risk and Legal (Office of Strategy, Planning and Performance) to develop, in consultation with the host organisation, a customised formal agreement.</p> <p>2.4 The customised formal agreement must be endorsed by the school before it is formally signed by an authorised person from the University, normally the head of school in an event where the head of school is the unit coordinator, the Dean of the Graduate Research School for HDR students, and an authorised person from the host organisation.</p> <p>2.5 Unit coordinator must ensure that a copy of the signed agreement and details of its endorsement by the school is forwarded to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) / Office of the Dean of Graduate Research School (where applicable) which maintains a register of all new and existing agreements; and (ii) Archives and Records Management Services to be TRIMMed. <p>3. Roles and Responsibilities</p> <p>3.1. Roles and responsibilities for University staff, students and the host organisation involved in experiential learning activities are outlined in Schedule 1.</p>

5 Student Professionalism

- 5.1 A student participating in experiential learning activity must, during their placement, adhere to the University's Code of Conduct and meet relevant professional behaviour.
- 5.2 The professional behaviour specified in 5.1 may relate, but not limited, to:
 - a) professional conduct by:
 - i. establishing and maintaining respectful relationships;
 - ii. treating people with dignity, and where relevant with compassion;
 - iii. behaving in an appropriate manner that upholds the image and reputation of the University and is consistent with the standards set by the host organisation;

- iv. adhering to disciplinary standards of the University and the host organisation;
- v. conforming to any professional dress and grooming standards of the host organisation;
- vi. engaging with and responding positively to professional advice and all constructive feedback including criticisms; and
- vii. maintaining harmonious and respectful interpersonal relationships amongst peers in the host organisation.

b) professional ethics by:

- i. behaving in a trustworthy manner;
- ii. maintaining a commitment to organisational confidentiality requirements; and
- iii. observing scholarly honesty throughout the duration of the experiential learning;

c) professional responsibilities by:

- i. adhering to the working conditions of the host organisation including those relating to patient / client / student consent processes;
- ii. using the resources of the host organisation thoughtfully, appropriately and responsibly at all times;
- iii. familiarising with and enacting to the best of your ability relevant external legislative requirements, and protocols and policies of the host organisation; and
- iv. committing to the highest standards of competence.

d) professional diligence by demonstrating initiative, work commitment and effective time management.

5.3 Schools (or equivalent) may set requirements relating to student professionalism in addition to those referred to in 5.2, provided they are presented in a [schedule](#) as part of this policy.

5.4 A student who is reported for unprofessional behaviour while undertaking an experiential learning activity in a host organisation may face University disciplinary measures in accordance with [Statute 17: Student Discipline](#) and [Regulations for Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

6 Evaluation, monitoring and compliance

6.1 All experiential learning activities must comply with relevant government legislation, University policies and, where appropriate relevant professional accreditation requirements including but not limited to: the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA); the Dental Board of Australia; Engineers Australia; Teachers Registration Board; AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) Accreditation; the Law Society of Western Australia; the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC); and the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017.

6.2 An experiential learning activity arranged in line with the requirements of the student's course is lawfully unpaid under the Fair Work Act 2009, except in cases where:

- a) provision for a payment has been agreed to by both the University and the host organisation,
 - b) the experiential learning activity relates to research end-user engagement by HDR students as set out in section 3 of this policy.
- 6.3 The University provides reasonable adjustments to ensure students with disability or health condition have equitable access to and participate in experiential learning activities, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2009 and the [University Policy on Disability and Medical Conditions \(UP12/12\)](#).
- 6.4 Experiential learning activities for onshore international students must comply with the student's visa conditions and ESOS Act.
- 6.5 Students on approved experiential learning activities in Australia or overseas must comply with all applicable agreements, including the following in relation to all experiential learning activities:
- a) [UWA Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct](#);
 - b) [Statute 17: Student Discipline](#);
 - c) [Regulations for Student Conduct and Discipline](#);
 - d) Student professionalism (see section 5); and
 - e) Laws governing privacy or confidentiality of information in relation to WIL activity at the host organisation.
- 6.6 All students, prior to the commencement of an experiential learning activity, must have successfully completed an online module, developed by the University, which must cover educational, legislative, and professional conduct matters, and information about the minimum requirements for experiential learning activities.
- 6.7 Course conveners must monitor student engagement in, and satisfaction with, experiential learning activities as part of regular course review.
- 6.8 Where relevant, units/courses with an experiential learning component must be identified in analysis of Student's Unit Reflective Feedback (SURF) and compared with non-experiential learning units at University and school level.
- 6.8.1 Key performance indicators for the effectiveness of experiential learning programs include levels and improvements in student experience and student satisfaction (teaching, employability and generic skills scores) in national surveys and SURF.

7 Managing complaints

- 7.1 Complaints relating to experiential learning activities are dealt in accordance with the [University Policy on Student Complaint Resolution \(UP07/98\)](#).

Procedure

4. Complaints Management

- 4.1 The University adopts a framework approach, as set out in [Schedule 2](#), for handling problems and issues arising from learning activities involving host organisations.

8 Recording of completion of experiential learning units

- 8.1 Completion of an experiential learning activity must be recorded on a student's academic transcript.

Procedure

5. Recording units/courses with experiential learning activity in academic transcripts

5.1 Approved experiential learning units / courses must be flagged as such in the Student Information Management System (SIMS) on advice by the Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) / Office of Dean of Graduate Research School, where relevant.

5.2 SIMS is advised by faculties that students have successfully completed experiential learning units in coursework courses by the procedure set out in the ['how to' guide](#), which can also be accessed via a link on the staff Connect page.

5.3 Student Administration records successful completion of a unit/course comprising an experiential learning activity at the end of the student's academic transcript by using the following statement "[Unit Code] [Unit Name] contained an assessable component of experiential learning".

5.4 For HDR students, the Graduate Research School ensures that students' completion of an approved experiential learning activity is recorded in the form of a dedicated unit and displayed on the student's academic transcript.

5.5 Student Administration must ensure that the definition of experiential learning, as defined in this policy, must appear on the reverse side of the student's academic transcript.

Related forms: (Link)

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Related Policies or legislation:

[University Policy on Assessment \(UP15/5\)](#)

[University Policy on Student complaint resolution \(UP07/98\)](#)

[University Policy on Incidental student fees and charges \(UP07/20\)](#)

[University Policy on Intellectual property \(UP07/49\)](#)

[UWA Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct](#)

[Statute 17: Student Discipline](#)

[Regulations for Student Conduct and Discipline](#)

[University Policy on Disability and Medical Conditions \(UP12/12\)](#)

[University Policy on Incidental Student Fees and Charges](#)

[University Policy on Credit Transfer, Advanced Standing and Recognition of Prior Learning \(UP 11/34\)](#)

[University Policy on Review and Appeal of Academic Decisions relating to Students \(UP15/1\)](#)

[University Policy on Graduate Research Training](#)

[University Policy on the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarships](#)

[University Policy on International Student Mobility \(Outbound\) \(UP16/4\)](#)

Schedule A: CONDITIONS for HDR STUDENTS UNDERTAKING INTERNSHIPS

1. Eligibility

1.1 Both domestic and international HDR students are eligible to apply for internships.

1.2 Both full-time and part-time HDR students are eligible to apply for internships.

1.3 A doctoral student is eligible to apply for internships only after they have achieved Confirmation of Candidature.

1.4 Subject to 1.4.1, a Master by research student is eligible to apply for internships only after their Research Proposal has been approved.

1.4.1 Students enrolled in the Master of Research (MRes) are not eligible to apply for internships.

1.5 To be considered for an internship a student must be assessed as having made satisfactory progress in their HDR and be up to date with all milestones as well as meeting eligibility requirements for the internship.

1.6 A student must obtain the formal approval of their supervisors and Graduate Research Coordinator/s and the Graduate Research School prior to committing to an internship.

1.7 A student in receipt of sponsorships or scholarships funded from outside UWA must obtain written permission from the sponsor to undertake the internship

1.8 Insurance cover must be assured for the student during the term of the internship.

1.9 Internships overseas must be detailed in an agreement that covers the funding, travel and insurance arrangements. Students will be required to apply formally for overseas leave.

1.10 A student may not commence an internship in the last 6 months of their candidature or during any extension of candidature or scholarship, unless the intention for this was clearly indicated well beforehand, including in the application for extension if applicable, and accounted for in the completion plan.

1.11 A student may undertake an internship after they have submitted their thesis for examination but in this case the internship, except in special circumstances, and with the approval of the GRS ,commence before the thesis is classified and normally no more than six weeks after the thesis is submitted.

2. Duration and management

2.1. Except in the context of an Approved Graduate Research Program, a student may not undertake internships for more than a total of six months during candidature, and not for more than three months post-submission.

2.2 A student's candidature will normally continue without suspension while they are engaged in an internship.

2.3 A student who engages in an internship must continue to meet all agreed milestones by the due dates.

2.4 Extensions of candidature time or time to complete thesis revisions will except in special circumstances, and with the approval of the GRS not be approved on the grounds of the internship.

2.5 Subject to the conditions of the stipend scholarship, a student may elect to either:

2.5.1 suspend their stipend scholarship for the whole period of the internship and resume their scholarship at the end of the internship with no loss of scholarship tenure; the student may not temporarily resume their scholarship to take paid annual leave/holidays during the period of internship, or

2.5.2 retain their stipend scholarship for the whole period of the internship and also receive any payment for the internship, as long as the total payment for the internship and any other top up payments does not exceed 75% of the annual value of the scholarship. The scholarship will expire in keeping with the determined schedule. Extensions of scholarship will not be granted on the grounds of the internship.

2.6 A part-time student receiving a stipend scholarship may undertake an internship only within their part-time enrolment.

2.7 A part-time student not in receipt of a stipend scholarship may undertake an internship full or part-time.

3. Additional conditions for international students

3.1. An international student may not suspend candidature to undertake an internship in Australia.

3.2. International students should not be encouraged or approved to undertake internships longer than three months unless there is a clear plan for ensuring that the internship will not compromise their PhD progress.

3.3. An international student who wishes to undertake an internship after submitting their thesis must hold a valid visa for the duration of the internship and except in special circumstances, and with the approval of the GRS, must commence the internship within 6 weeks of thesis submission. They are not provided with a new Confirmation of Enrolment in order to undertake an internship.

4. Procedure

4.1 All students wishing to undertake an internship must complete an [Application for Research End User Engagement Leave \(LV-REU\)](#), addressing the requirements listed above, as applicable.