

March 18, 2020 – Placement update

Information for agencies/supervisors and students: ACAP placements and COVID-19

ACAP is actively monitoring coronavirus (COVID-19) developments and considering the latest health advice from Australian health authorities. We're fortunate that there are currently no confirmed or suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) cases among ACAP staff or students. ACAP senior leaders are meeting daily to monitor the situation and ensure we have plans to respond to different and emerging scenarios and to communicate this to the ACAP community as quickly as possible. Our focus remains on preventing the spread of the virus, supporting the health and wellbeing of our learning and teaching community and minimising disruptions to study.

ACAP has been advised by the accrediting bodies – AASW, ACA, PACFA, APAC, ICF - that alternatives to placement practices and placement supervision will be considered. Alternative and flexible measures may include online and/or remote supervision, online counselling, online seminar delivery, and completion of pre-determined tasks remotely.

With this in mind, we would like to alleviate supervisor and student concerns regarding student placements by advising the following:

Agencies/Supervisors

Agencies are encouraged to comply with public health announcements from State and Federal authorities and take the necessary precautionary measures to protect themselves, students and clients. In response to COVID-19, we would ask agencies to ensure the following:

- If a supervisor or agency staff member becomes unwell, and/or is diagnosed with COVID-19, and/or feels they are no longer able to supervise the student, please advise ACAP as soon as possible (after attending to the health requirements of the individual);
- If an agency is to be placed in lockdown, please advise the student and ACAP immediately;
- Agencies must provide students with emergency contact details in the case of a lockdown or closure;
- Agency supervisors should sign off placement attendance hours completed by the student at least weekly, but preferably daily;
- If your agency is considering online alternatives and/ or would like advice or assistance for supervision, counselling, and providing remote alternatives for tasks, please contact the relevant Student Placement Adviser to discuss, refer list below.

Students

Students are expected to continue to attend placements and comply with Agency directives as planned and exercise the appropriate health and safety precautions. It is imperative that all students keep ACAP informed of any issues whilst attending their placement, so that appropriate actions can be taken as needed. We would ask students to do the following:

- If students are concerned at any time regarding their health, please advise the agency supervisor and ACAP immediately;
- If any student would like to pause or early-exit from their placement, please contact the relevant Student Placement Adviser to discuss deferring their placement to a later date;
- Students must provide the agency and/or supervisor with their emergency contact details;
- In the case of an agency lockdown, students should notify ACAP as soon as possible. If a student's placement is discontinued due to agency lockdown, arrangements will be made to minimise any future disruptions to study. Student placement hours completed up to this point and approved will be recognised. If it is not possible to continue the placement at the same agency and/or with the same supervisor, alternative arrangements will be made;
- If you are aware that your placement agency is considering online or remote alternatives for tasks, supervision and counselling, please contact the relevant Student Placement Adviser to discuss. Alternative placement and field education learning activities that can be completed remotely/off-site on a temporary basis may be considered. Only pre-approved activities will be recognised as meeting course requirements;
- Students are required to ensure that they complete their placement details and hours at least weekly, but preferably daily. Students are required to ensure that their placement hours and details are signed off by the agency supervisor, at least weekly, but preferably daily;
- If an upcoming student placement has been scheduled, in consultation with the agency and the student, arrangements can be made for the student to commence at a later date.

Work-based Placements

For those students who are undertaking a placement at their workplace, please ensure that you follow the directions and guidelines of your agency and workplace.

International Placements

Students who are undertaking placements overseas, please ensure that you follow the directions and guidelines of the local health authorities and the agency. If students have any concerns regarding their placement and/or supervision, please contact the relevant Student Placement Adviser, refer list below.

ACAP will continue to provide updates to students, agencies and agency supervisors as new information becomes available.

If you have any enquiries or additional questions, please email the relevant ACAP Student Placement Adviser as follows:

COUNSELLING		
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PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

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VET (Vocational Education and Training courses)

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Sincerely,
ACAP Placements Team