Professional Experience Handbook

Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood)
Course Code BA-EDUEC2

Bachelor of Education (Primary)
Course Code BA-EDUPRI

Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Primary)
Course Code GD-TEAPRI2

Master of Teaching (Primary)
Course Code MA-TEAPRI1
Contents
INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 4
SWINBURNE ONLINE CONTACTS .............................................................................................. 4
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE SUMMARY ........................................................................... 5
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE IMPORTANT INFORMATION ...................................................... 6
  Child Safety Screening Clearance (CSSC) .................................................................................. 6
  Conflict of Interest .................................................................................................................... 6
  Confidentiality .......................................................................................................................... 6
  Attendance Requirements ......................................................................................................... 7
  Missed day’s policy .................................................................................................................... 7
  Professional Codes and Standards ............................................................................................. 7
  OHS Responsibilities ................................................................................................................ 8
  Insurance coverage during Practicum ....................................................................................... 8
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS ................................................................. 9
  General Placement Requirements .......................................................................................... 9
  General Information for Pre-service Teachers (whilst on a professional experience) ............... 9
    General expectations during you placement .......................................................................... 9
    Emergency information form .............................................................................................. 10
  School camps and excursions ................................................................................................. 10
  Industrial Action ...................................................................................................................... 10
  Health Considerations ............................................................................................................ 10
  Mandatory Reporting ........................................................................................................... 10
  Professional setting resources ............................................................................................... 11
SWINBURNE ONLINE SUPPORT ROLES ........................................................................ 11
  Professional Placements Team ............................................................................................... 11
  Student Liaison Team ............................................................................................................. 12
  ELearning Advisor (eLA) ........................................................................................................ 12
EDUCATION SETTING ROLES ............................................................................................. 13
  Principal/Director .................................................................................................................. 13
  Pre-service Teacher Coordinator (PSTC) ............................................................................... 13
  Mentor Teacher (MT) ............................................................................................................ 14
  Nominated Supervisor .......................................................................................................... 15
  Payment to Education setting for supervision of the Pre-service Teacher ............................... 15
PRE-SERVICE TEACHER INFORMATION ....................................................................... 16
  Pre-service Teacher (PST) ..................................................................................................... 16
Professional Placements Experience ................................................................. 17
Arranging your Placement ................................................................................. 17
Selection of a Mentor Teacher ........................................................................... 19
Types of Education Settings ............................................................................... 19
During your placement ..................................................................................... 20
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS COMMUNICATION PROCESS ............. 21
Professional Experience Assessment Reporting and Documentation Process .......... 21
General Assessment Information ...................................................................... 21
Assessment Process of Professional Experience ................................................. 22
Assessment policies and procedures ............................................................... 22
Formative Assessment ...................................................................................... 23
Successful completion of program .................................................................. 23
Interim Assessment Report .............................................................................. 24
Support Plan (student making unsatisfactory progress) ..................................... 24
Stages of reporting unsatisfactory progress ..................................................... 25
Final Assessment Report .................................................................................. 26
Exceptional circumstances .............................................................................. 27
Procedure for submission of assessment reports .............................................. 27
Appeals .............................................................................................................. 27
Curriculum Planning, Implementation and Evaluation ......................................... 27
Curriculum development .................................................................................. 27
Early childhood prior-to-school education settings ....................................... 27
School settings ............................................................................................... 28
Professional Experience documentation ......................................................... 28
Formats for learning/lesson plans .................................................................... 28
Learning Experience Planning ........................................................................ 28
Mentor Teacher Comments and Pre-service Teacher Reflections ...................... 29
Planning and Feedback on lesson/learning experience plans .......................... 30
INTRODUCTION
This handbook provides comprehensive information about the Practicum Units and specific to the Professional experience component, as well including Swinburne University of Technology policies and Swinburne Online requirements and guidelines.

Swinburne Online Education Courses:
- Bachelor of Education - Early Childhood
- Bachelor of Education – Primary
- Graduate Diploma of Teaching – Primary
- Master of Teaching – Primary

The handbook will reference to generic information that is relevant to all four education courses and will also provide specific requirements that are relevant to each course. This handbook is for the use of the Pre-service Teacher and Education settings to gain a better insight to specific information relating to Professional Experience.

Swinburne Online
Swinburne Online is an innovative partnership between Swinburne University of Technology and SEEK Learning. It combines Swinburne’s quality course content with SEEK Learning’s online marketing capabilities in a unique public/private venture. Online learning is an emerging market with unlimited potential.

SWINBURNE ONLINE CONTACTS
Student Liaison Officer
Pre-service Teachers of Swinburne Online will be further supported throughout their studies by a team of Student Liaison Officers (SLOs).

For advice or support with any other issues Pre-service Teachers are invited to contact the Student Liaison Officers.

Monday to Friday: 9:00am – 9:00pm
Saturday/Sunday: 10:00am – 6:00pm
Email: help@swinburneonline.com
Phone: 1300 YES SOL (1300 937 765)

Professional Placements Team
Education Settings, whether it be Mentor Teachers, Pre-service Teacher Coordinator, Principals or Directors can make contact with the Professional Placements Team if problems arise that are associated with the placement. Pre-service Teachers will be further supported while they are on Professional Experience by the Professional Placements Team

Monday to Friday: 9:00am – 5:00pm
Email: placements@swinburneonline.com
Phone: 1300 797 765
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

All Swinburne Online Education courses have a range of between 3 - 5 Practicum units as part of the overall course (dependent on which course you are studying). A Practicum unit is a unit which is made up of both theory and classroom practice. This practical component is very often referred to as a Professional Experience and/or a placement.

Professional Experience is an integral part of the education programs at Swinburne Online. Through experiencing the roles and responsibilities of a teacher and pedagogical leader, there will be opportunities to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to become a competent member of the teaching profession. Pre-service Teachers will have direct supervision by a Mentor Teacher at all times. In each placement Pre-service Teachers will be supervised by an experienced Mentor Teacher who will work with them as they progress towards attaining the Graduate Standards. Teaching has many dimensions. It embraces a vision of education that includes an understanding of child development, curriculum knowledge, interpersonal skills, effective pedagogies and a moral purpose that embraces a culture of care and ethical standards. Experience during placements will enhance professional knowledge, skills and competencies. It will give Pre-service Teachers an experiential basis for critical reflection on the current state of education and the possibilities for educational reform in the early 21st century.

Through Professional Experience, Pre-service Teachers will develop confidence in and awareness of the professional teacher’s role in the community, be exposed to a range of settings, philosophies and approaches to education and may encounter challenges to their current and developing philosophies of teaching.

The Professional Experiences are designed to be an opportunity for Pre-service Teachers to learn to teach in a supervised and supportive environment as they gradually take on full responsibility.

Throughout all courses there is a strong focus on learning through critical reflection on theory, observed practice and hands on experience. Teaching demands a focus on both theoretical and experiential perspectives. Understanding of theories of teaching and learning will be put into practice through the experience of working with children and families during Professional Experience. Pre-service Teachers will be encouraged to formulate their own vision of teaching and learning through reflection on their experience in educational settings.

Critical reflection involves questioning and challenging ideas. Through Professional Experience activities and assessments, Pre-service Teachers will become accustomed to giving and receiving feedback. All courses aim to instil a habit of ongoing critical reflection on practice and the ability to do this collaboratively with colleagues. Collaborating with colleagues involves being aware of their feelings and sensitivities and acknowledging the critical importance of interpersonal relationships in sustaining productive teamwork.

Through systematic critical reflection Pre-service Teachers will learn to link practice and theory and adopt a process view of learning as distinct from a product view. Pre-service Teachers will learn to process their own experiential learning and accept the challenges involved in productively facilitating children’s learning. Pre-service Teachers should understand theory as ongoing reflection and decision-making, involving both the recollection of established ideas and the moment-by-moment creation of new ways of explaining experience and predicting its consequences.

There are significant differences between early childhood settings and schools and even between teaching spaces and student groupings within the same education setting. They differ in terms of organisational structure, philosophy of teaching, pedagogy, demographics, curriculum, age range and size. Ideally, Pre-service Teachers should experience a wide range of settings for Professional Experience. Accordingly, Pre-service Teachers will be required to attend on a full time basis and complete the number of allocated days with different age groups relevant to their program.
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information within this section focuses on the important and critical information that the Pre-service Teacher is required to know and will share with the education setting. This information is also located within the Acceptance of Placement form as part of the ‘Student Declaration’ that the Pre-service Teacher needs to acknowledge that they have read and agree to this conditions. Pre-service Teachers’ will need to familiarise and make certain that you are very clear on what are your obligations and expectations whilst studying through Swinburne Online.

Child Safety Screening Clearance (CSSC)

As a Pre-service Teacher, it is necessary for you to have child safety screening checks (i.e. working with Children Check and/or Police Check) as your State or Territory requires.

It is important to complete child safety screening as soon as possible as the process can take 4-6 weeks. It is not only related to enrolment in a Professional Experience Unit, it is an essential step in your enrolment when studying an education course with Swinburne Online.

Information on forward planning and your letter of introduction for approaching education settings can only be sent to you once we have received your Child Safety Screening documents.

Please visit our website – child safety screening check process.

Conflict of Interest

Professional experience cannot be undertaken in an education setting where:

- You are already employed (e.g. as an educator, teacher aide, technical assistant or administrator)
- Family members (including your own children) or close friends are employed or attend the setting

It is imperative to protect the Education Setting and Pre-service Teachers, in relation to privacy and confidentiality. The Pre-service Teacher should also seek and expect a fair and objective assessment from the Education setting whilst on their Professional experience. This condition is also in place to protect the integrity of one or more of the abovementioned parties.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality in relation to information about children, families and staff in the setting must be maintained at all times. References to specific children and early childhood settings or schools must be deleted when reproducing examples and case studies. Only children’s first names should be used and any other identifying features must be removed from documentation. Written permission must be given by parents/legal guardians before child study and observations commence.

Collecting children’s work for examples or grading must be authorised by the Mentor Teacher and, where possible, by the children. You must ensure you comply with the policies and procedures of the early childhood setting or school in relation to photographs and audio or video recordings. Any collection or use of children’s work or images must:

- Protect the personal information of individuals
- Maintain the dignity of the child
- Respect the individual’s right to control how and for what purpose their personal information is used
- Comply with the relevant legislation and educational settings policy.
**Attendance Requirements**

During your placement, you are expected to attend the education setting on a full time basis. To be considered full time, you must attend a minimum of 38 hours per week under the supervision of your Mentor Teacher(s). This also must include a minimum of 25 hours contact time with children per week. Attending full time gives Pre-service Teachers the opportunity to become fully involved in the life of the schools/settings. 100% attendance is expected. Any days missed due to exceptional circumstances must be made up.

You can keep track of your attendance by using the Attendance Diary (located on Blackboard). This diary is for your records only and does not have to be returned to the Professional Placements Team.

**Missed days policy**

Each practicum unit involves attendance in an education setting for a specified number of days. The dates for the Professional Experience are included on the Professional Experience Calendar, Acceptance of Placement form and information sheets. You are required to adhere to these dates and number of days in completing your Professional Experience. **Any missed days MUST be made up** at a time negotiated with the education setting and the Professional Placements Team.

Pre-service Teachers are expected to be punctual and attend the setting on a fulltime basis.

When illness or emergencies prevent attendance at an education setting, you should contact the Professional Placements Team and Education setting before the Professional Experience day commences. You should make up missed days as soon as possible to provide continuity.

On completion of each Professional Experience your Final Assessment Report will need to note the total number of days completed.

**Professional Codes and Standards**

Pre-service Teachers are required to act professionally and ethically at all times, in accordance with the Teaching Profession Code of Conduct relevant to their state or territory and/or the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics within early childhood settings.

- Approach your Professional Experience positively and with enthusiasm.
- Ensure that you are always on time, polite, professional and focused on what you should be doing.
- Wear your name badge (*currently being scoped for the next teaching period*), carry your student ID card and your Working with Children card.
- Please turn off your mobile phone or leave it (on silent) in your bag.
- You are expected to be Swinburne Online’s ambassador and to give the Professional Experience setting a positive impression of yourself and Swinburne Online.
- When completing the Acceptance of a Swinburne Online Pre-service Teacher Placement form, you will be required to sign off to say you have read the VIT’s Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and the ECA Code of ethics (please see the links below).
- In other states, jurisdictions and education settings, other codes of conduct may also apply. As part of your wider study you will be required to investigate your state’s code of conduct; however, as this course is accredited by the Victorian Institute of Teaching, it is their Code of Conduct you will sign off against.
- Pre-service Teachers are guests in schools and other education settings and your behaviour will affect future Swinburne Online placements as well as perceptions of the professionalism of the field. Avoid making defamatory remarks (verbal and written) about children, families, colleagues and the Professional Experience setting under any circumstances.
- You should also consider your behaviour in public forums outside the Professional Experience.
setting. This includes your public presence on social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, which are easily accessed by children, families and colleagues. Pre-service Teachers are advised to ensure they are not represented inappropriately on these sites and to use private domains for personal interactions using this media.

- Professional conduct is not confined to the educational setting. While studying online will give you a very good understanding of appropriate conduct online, it is important to familiarise yourself with important issues and develop an understanding of appropriate conduct for teachers in the online environment. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development have produced a Using Social Media: Guide for Department Employees to provide guidance on professional conduct for Teachers in an online environment.
- Pre-service Teachers should also avoid giving personal details to families under any circumstances.


**OHS Responsibilities**

Pre-service Teachers should ensure that they are informed by the education setting about:

- Occupational health and safety procedures in the school/setting and on excursions and camps
- Accidents, first aid and emergency procedures and responsible personnel
- Staff and student duty of care, welfare and discipline policies
- Professional expectations of Pre-service Teachers
- Policies regarding daily arrival and departure, leaving the setting during work hours and authorised access outside normal working hours

All occupational health and safety incidents in which you are involved should be reported to the school or early childhood setting following the settings policies and procedures for health and safety incidents. Please provide the details of any incidents to the Professional Placements Team.

**Insurance coverage during Practicum**

Swinburne University of Technology’s public liability insurance policy covers the University for any claims made against it related to personal injury to other parties or damage to the property of others. Pre-service Teachers engaged in Professional Experience are regarded as an extension of the University and the policy protects them against such claims that may arise from activities associated with their Professional Experience.

Should you become injured whilst engaged in Professional Experience activities, you may be able to claim against a personal accident policy taken out by the University covering major injury to any of its students engaged in work experience. It should be noted though that this personal accident policy is limited to the provision of lump-sum payments related to major and disabling injuries such as the loss of a limb. It does not cover medical and hospital costs arising out of an injury. These remain the responsibility of the Pre-service Teacher. In the event, however, of Pre-service Teachers incurring injury through the negligence of another party, the usual legal remedies are available to claim against the offending party.

Pre-service Teachers are not paid by the University and are not covered by the University’s Workers’ Compensation policy.
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS

General Placement Requirements
Education students are responsible for arranging and managing their own placement. Swinburne Online will provide guidance and support through the Professional Placement Team. Please familiarise yourself with the following professional placement requirements:

• Placements cannot be completed in a school or early childhood setting where:
  o you are employed (e.g. as teacher aide, technical assistant or administrator)
  o family members or close friends are employed or attend the setting.
• To meet placement standards, you must:
  o complete only one placement in each education setting (except EDU80003 - Master of Teaching Professional Internship Research Project)
  o work with learners in a variety of school year levels (i.e. each placement should take place in a different year level/age group)
  o attend the education setting on a full time basis during the specified placements dates
• Placements days must be completed in a consecutive block
• English must be the primary language of delivery in all education settings
• A placement cannot be split between two locations even if they are part of the same company or education setting
• Placements can be completed outside of Australia and must follow the Placement Requirements. We recommend that you approach mainstream education settings that will provide a similar experience to that which you would experience in Australia. Please contact the Professional Placements Team for more information
• Pre-service Teachers must have current Child Safety Screening Checks

General Information for Pre-service Teachers (whilst on a professional experience)

General expectations during your placement
• Pre-service teachers must attend a minimum of 38 hours per week under the supervision of the Mentor Teacher(s). This also must include a minimum of 25 hours contact time with children per week.
• 100% attendance is expected. Any days missed due to exceptional circumstances must be made up.
• Wherever you complete your placement you must be fully supervised and adhere to all requirements and regulations set by the education setting
• Swinburne Online does not send a representative to the education setting to observe your placement
• Education settings are paid industry standard rates for the supervision of Pre-service Teachers
• Please keep the Professional Placements Team informed of any changes to your placement. This may be changes to Mentor and/or Pre-service Teacher Coordinator, or other events such as illness or special circumstances.

Emergency information form
We encourage you to download a copy of the Professional Experience Emergency Contact Information form, which is available via Blackboard on the Education Community: Practicums and our Profession community site. This form provides vital information to the early childhood setting or school and emergency response staff in the event of an emergency during Professional Experience. Please complete the form, place in an envelope, and hand to the Mentor Teacher or the Pre-service Teacher Coordinator on your first day of Professional Experience.
at the education setting. At the end of each Professional Experience, you should collect your form. Please ensure you keep this information up to date for the Professional Experience setting.

School camps and excursions
You may be invited to assist teaching staff on school camps or excursions. Days spent on camps or excursions will count for your Professional Experience, whether or not the children you are supervising come from classes that you have been teaching or will be teaching.

Industrial Action
If the teaching union undertakes industrial action such as a work stoppage during Professional Experience and you decide not to attend the education setting due to strike action, or to attend a stop work meeting, you will be required to make up any days missed. In such cases you must notify the Education Setting and the Professional Placements Team of your intentions. If your Mentor Teacher is on strike and you wish to attend the education setting, you may do so only if there are teachers present to supervise. Under no circumstances should you carry out any duties for absent staff members. Any days missed under these circumstances need to be made up.

Health Considerations
You are advised to take the following protective measures regarding your health while on Professional Experience:

- Ensure immunisations against hepatitis, measles, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and rubella are up to date;
- Ensure that you are physically healthy during Professional Experience.

Mandatory Reporting
Early Childhood teachers and primary school teachers are well placed to observe and identify when a child is at risk of harm including signs of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and/or family violence.

Besides having a duty of care, teachers in schools and licensed early childhood settings have varying degrees of mandatory requirements to report any suspicions or knowledge of children at risk of significant harm depending on the State or Territory where they are located.

Pre-service Teachers who have concerns about a child’s safety should first communicate this to their Mentor and/Supervisor. Pre-service Teachers may also choose to seek support and guidance from their eLA (online tutor).

In Victoria, please refer to ‘Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People’ (DEECD & DHS, 2010), available from


More information about Mandatory reporting and the requirements across Australia can be found at

**South Australia Requirements**

South Australian Pre-service Teachers require a Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RAN-EC) certificate and a Working with Children Screening Check before undertaking their Professional Experience Placement. Please visit our [website](#) for more information.

**Professional setting resources**

Pre-service Teachers are expected to use a range of resources during Professional Experience to support the teaching and learning process. Many resources, such as books and play and learning materials, are likely to be available to you in the education setting and you can make yourself familiar with them in the first few days of your Professional Experience. Any books or resources borrowed during the Professional Experience must be returned before the end of the Professional Experience. Any costs related to loss or damage of school/setting property use are your responsibility.

You will also be expected to use resources that you collect through your Professional Experience and throughout the course. These may include books, natural materials, improvised props from charity shops and discount stores, education resources for specific purposes such as science, maths and literacy experiences and resources that you have made, such as poetry cards, display pictures and games.

**SWINBURNE ONLINE SUPPORT ROLES**

**Professional Placements Team**

Role & responsibilities of the Professional Placements Team:

- Provide guidance and support to Pre-service Teachers when approaching education setting in arranging their own placements;
- Assist with the organisation and support of placements;
- Provide Pre-service Teachers and education settings with information pertinent to the Professional Experience placement;
- Maintain a record of required documentation;
- Provide a point of contact for the education setting and Pre-service Teacher if problems arise in a Pre-service Teacher’s Professional Experience;
- Provide education setting payments to education settings;
- Communicate to all education settings who have accepted a Swinburne Online student;
- Provide support for the Mentor Teacher, Organiser of Teaching Practice and Nominated Supervisor when required in addressing the assessment and reporting procedures;
- Liaise with the Program Director of Education to facilitate further action and support as required.

Mentor Teachers and Pre-service Teachers can make contact with the Professional Placements Team if questions arise during placements.

**Monday to Friday:** 9:00am – 5:00pm

**Email:** placements@swinburneonline.com

**Phone:** 1300 797 765
**Student Liaison Team**
Pre-service Teachers of Swinburne Online will be further supported throughout their studies by a team of Student Liaison Officers (SLOs).

The Student Liaison Officers will:

- Provide information on general information regarding Education course, Practicums and general Enquiries with professional placements experience;
- Workflow any follow up enquiries to the Professional Placements Team.

**Monday to Friday:** 9:00am – 9:00pm  
**Saturday/Sunday:** 10:00am – 6:00pm  
**Email:** help@swinburneonline.com  
**Phone:** 1300 YES SOL (1300 937 765)

**ELearning Advisor (eLA)**
Pre-service Teachers on Professional Experience are officially enrolled in a Unit. Pre-service Teachers will be allocated to groups of around 25 students and assigned an eLearning Advisor (eLA), who will be suitably academically qualified and have appropriate Professional Experience. The eLA will facilitate the development of a learning community online, communicating through the Learning Management System, BlackBoard, via announcements, discussion boards, chat sessions, email and Collaborate sessions, as well as through Blogs and Wikis as appropriate.

The eLearning Advisor (eLA) is responsible for ensuring that Pre-service Teachers enrolled in Swinburne Online units enjoy a high quality and positive learning experience. The eLA will be responsible for the online delivery of Swinburne Online units, which include facilitating learning activities, marking assessment submissions and providing formative feedback.

Pre-service Teachers will be in regular contact with their eLearning Advisors (eLA) throughout the Professional Experience to discuss teaching matters. The eLearning Advisor will:

- Maintain academic oversight over the Professional Experience Unit;
- Be in regular communication with the Pre-service Teacher during the Professional Experience;
- Make direct email contact as required with all Pre-service Teachers during the Professional Experience;
- Encourage and support the Pre-service Teacher’s critical reflections on their Professional Experience;
- Facilitate group discussion on the professional context within which teachers work;
- Foster an online community of practice among Pre-service Teachers undergoing the Professional Experience;
- Provide online support and advice in relation to problems encountered during the Professional Experience;
- Assist with the development of strategies and ensure that the Pre-service Teacher is clear about the area/s of concern and how to address it/them should they be deemed to be having difficulties;
- Assess the Pre-service Teacher against the wider unit objectives.
EDUCATION SETTING ROLES

Principal/Director

Principals in primary schools and Directors in early childhood settings have overall responsibility for all areas of operation of the education setting.

Pre-service Teachers are under the administrative responsibility of the Principal/Director. The Principal/Director’s responsibilities include:

- Approving the acceptance of a Swinburne Online Pre-service Teacher for Professional Experience before returning details to Swinburne Online;
- Welcoming Pre-service Teachers to the education setting, perhaps by announcing their presence in a newsletter; and giving them an overview of the education setting, its philosophy and an introduction to key policies and documents;
- Ensuring that all staff are aware that Pre-service Teachers are not to be given sole responsibility for the supervision of children.

Pre-service Teacher Coordinator (PSTC)

The Pre-service Teacher Coordinator, when available, coordinates and oversees the smooth running of Professional Experience within the education setting. In early childhood settings, the Director or Educational Leader may undertake this role in partnership with the Mentor Teacher.

Their responsibilities in welcoming a Pre-service Teacher to the education setting:

- Liaising with Swinburne Online via the Professional Placements Team or Manager, Professional Placements;
- Being familiar with and understanding the requirements of the Professional Experience and communicating this to Mentor Teachers;
- Inducting the Pre-service Teachers into the setting, including introduction to the staff, providing information about any responsibilities, internet access, parking arrangements, etc.;
- Explaining appropriate procedures for using resources, computers, photocopiers, cameras, telephones etc.;
- Briefing Pre-service Teachers on policies and procedures related to the Professional Experience;
- Explaining legal obligations during Professional Experience;
- Informing Pre-service Teachers of the Occupational Health and Safety policies used in the setting;
- Providing opportunities to attend staff meetings and other relevant professional activities occurring during Professional Experience when possible;
- Arranging opportunities to observe other classes and specialist areas within the education setting when possible;
- Monitoring the progress and welfare of Pre-service Teachers;
- Ensuring that the Professional Experience Interim Assessment Report required for all Professional Experience Units (with the exception of EDU30003) is completed by the Mentor at the midpoint of the Professional Experience and submitted;
- Ensuring that the Professional Experience Final Assessment Report is completed, discussed with and copied for the Pre-service Teacher and submitted by the early childhood and/or education setting to Swinburne Online within the communicated timeframes by the Professional Placements Team;
• Contacting Swinburne Online if a Pre-service Teacher fails to attend (without notice), is absent for more than two days, is likely to receive an unsatisfactory report or is experiencing difficulties;

• Ensuring that the Professional Experience: Pre-service Teacher Supervision Claim for Payment form is submitted to Swinburne Online within one week of the Professional Experience being completed.

**Mentor Teacher (MT)**

The Mentor Teacher is the professional in the education setting who works collaboratively with the Pre-service Teacher during the Professional Experience. The Mentor Teacher is responsible for monitoring progress, giving feedback and assessing performance.

The Mentor Teacher has a vital role in fostering the professional learning of Pre-service Teachers. Professional Experience provides Pre-service Teachers with the opportunity to work closely with practitioners who are willing to share their work as practising teachers and members of the wider education community.

Pre-service Teachers are expected to make a preliminary visit to the early childhood setting or school in which they are about to undertake their practicum. At this visit Mentor Teachers should:

• Provide Pre-service Teachers with relevant background information
• Inform them of the teaching programs and management policies and procedures
• Outline the expectations for planning and preparation; and
• Inform them of the available resources and specialist assistance which is available

Mentor Teachers will focus on the professional learning of Pre-service Teachers and monitoring their progress against the Australian Professional Standards for Graduate Teachers. Mentor Teachers will support and encourage Pre-service Teachers to gain optimum benefit from their Professional Experience. The Mentor Teacher is responsible for observing and guiding the day-to-day experience, including:

• Familiarising themselves with the particular requirements of the Professional Experience
• Introducing the Pre-service Teachers to other teachers and to the children they will teach
• Ensuring that the Pre-service Teacher has an appropriate work space and has the opportunity to carry out the specific expectations of the practicum
• Providing the Pre-service Teacher with varied experiences and challenges without over-burdening them
• Providing opportunities to engage in routines, subject-focused and cross-curriculum teaching
• Modelling teaching techniques that complement and supplement the feedback given
• Providing documentation such as planning materials as models of good practice
• Providing opportunities for success by avoiding situations where inexperience may lead to failure
• Holding regular discussions about particular and general issues related to such topics as teaching and learning, behaviour and guidance and educational setting operations
• Discussing planning for individual children, overall curriculum and specific lessons and learning experiences at least one day prior to their implementation
• Giving useful oral and/or written feedback on each day’s teaching experience, curriculum planning, teaching performance and assessment. Whether feedback is oral or written is at the discretion of the Mentor Teacher and the Pre-service Teacher. Feedback from learning experience observations can be added to the lesson/learning experience plans;
• Encouraging the Pre-service Teacher to reflect critically on their learning and teaching; Pre-service Teachers often need guidance in this aspect of their Professional Practice
• Regularly discussing progress and suggesting areas for improvement
• Negotiating completion of any make up days
• Discussing any aspects of the Pre-service Teacher’s practice before serious problems arise
• Completing an Interim Report and/or Support Plan if this is warranted
• Bringing any problems or difficulties to the attention of the Supervisor/Pre-service Teacher Coordinator and Swinburne Online Professional Placements Team in order to determine whether any action needs to be taken or additional support provided.

Provided the Mentor Teacher is a suitably qualified and experienced teacher, then they are responsible for the role of assessing the Pre-service Teacher in collaboration with the Supervisor/Pre-service Teacher Coordinator:

• Completing an Interim Report, required for all Professional Experience Units (except EDU30003), at the midway point of the Professional Experience. The Interim Experience Report requires assessment of progress against the Australian Professional Standards for Graduate Teachers. A Support Plan must be completed and submitted by the mentor if the Pre-service Teacher is making Unsatisfactory progress
• Completing the End of Professional Experience Assessment Report at the end of the Professional Experience, this includes assessment of progress against the Australian Professional Standards for Graduate Teachers.

Mentor Teachers are asked to consider the extent to which the Pre-service Teacher is assuming the professional responsibilities of a graduating teacher. The Pre-service Teacher’s Professional Experience folder or portfolio should be a complete record of the Professional Experience, with all documentation/evidence of specific practicum expectations (arranged in an organised and indexed manner), and can be used to inform the assessment made. Discussing the final report with the Pre-service Teacher;

• Giving the Pre-service Teacher opportunity to read, discuss and sign their final report before it is submitted to Swinburne Online’s Professional Placements Team; and
• Submitting this report to the Pre-service Teacher Coordinator or directly to the Professional Placement Team in a timely manner.

Mentor Teachers should note that Pre-service Teachers do not have legal responsibility for children and therefore should never be left unsupervised.

**Nominated Supervisor**
In the event that the Pre-service Teacher is not meeting the professional experience Requirements, not performing or has received on more Cause for Concern CC result on the Interim Progress Report, the Mentor should identify an additional secondary educator known as the Nominated Supervisor. The Mentor is required to contact the Professional Placement Team and complete the Professional Experience Support Plan in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor.

**Payment to Education setting for supervision of the Pre-service Teacher**
Payment is for the overall supervision of the Pre-service Teacher. The Swinburne Online model is to pay directly to the Education Setting, where the expectations would then be that the school would distribute the payments to the Pre-service Teacher Coordinator and/or Mentor Teacher. However, the Education setting and/or Mentor
Teacher may request payment to be made directly to an individual. In this instance, Swinburne Online requires approval from the Education setting to pay directly to an individual.

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER INFORMATION

Pre-service Teacher (PST)

To complete practicum units successfully Pre-service Teachers will:

- Make themselves aware of the practicum setting’s opening and closing hours for both children and teachers and attend for the times agreed equivalent to a full time teaching role (approx. 38 hours per week with a minimum of 25 hours contact time with children);
- Conform to the practicum setting’s policy concerning dress and professional behaviour;
- Provide all documentation to their mentor teacher at the initial meeting;
- Adequately prepare for specific practicum expectations and provide their mentor teacher with written plans for all lessons or learning experiences at least one day before these are scheduled;
- Become fully involved in the life of the educational settings where they are completing their professional experience, including staff meetings, yard duty, curriculum meetings, parent-teacher meetings and professional development activities when permitted;
- Participate in weekly online discussions, through their Blackboard units, where they link pedagogical theory to the professional experience;
- Observe a significant number of lessons or learning experiences, routines, interactions and teaching techniques of their mentor teacher and other teachers including specialist teachers;
- Participate in a range of activities in the setting where they are placed, including for example assisting with productions, sports programs, special events and celebrations, excursions and professional development;
- Attend staff meetings, curriculum meetings, professional development activities and if possible a school council meeting and/or management committee meeting if permitted;
- Undertake collaborative or team-teaching if possible;
- If the professional experience requires it discuss the Interim Report with the Mentor;
- Discuss the Final Report with the allocated Mentor;
- Be in regular communication with the eLearning Advisor during the professional experience;
- Participate in online activities in which pedagogical theory is linked to experience;
- Participate in an online community of practice among Pre-service Teachers undergoing the Professional Experience;
- Develop a comprehensive Professional Experience Folder.

The Professional Experience Folder/Portfolio can include:

- Teaching resources, aids and ideas;
- Learning experience plans, written comments, feedback and personal reflections on all aspects of the practicum experience;
- Copies of handbooks, policies and procedures, philosophies and curriculum documents;
- A collection of resources about play, learning environments and experiences;
• An electronic portfolio to assist with employment applications and as a record of growing development as a professional.

For use in your e-portfolio you may wish to keep documents in an electronic format. However, for the purposes of viewing by your Mentor Teacher or Supervisor, it is important that your Professional Experience Folder is made available as a hard copy.

**It is the Pre-service Teacher’s responsibility to ensure that records of specific practicum expectations are maintained in the professional experience folder and made available to the Mentor and/or Pre-service Teacher Coordinator on request.**

NOTE: It is vital to make the most of opportunities available during the Professional Experience to observe and learn from other teachers.

---

**Professional Experience Placements**

Education students are responsible for arranging and managing their own placement. Swinburne Online will provide guidance and support through the Professional Placement Team.

**Things to consider:**

• It is important to have a study load that is manageable. The Practicum unit consist of theoretical and practical components. You will be expected to attend your education setting full time for your placement block and lesson planning may be required in the evenings

• Plan ahead and make arrangements for leave from work commitments as required

• If you are a carer, consider planning your support network in advance so you can attend full time (for example 8.15am to 6.00pm)

• There is no requirement around the number of practicum units that need to be completed in a year, however delaying placements may extend the duration of your course, please refer to your Course Planner

• When selecting an education setting:
  - we strongly encourage diversity in your placement experience. You should complete each placement in a different education setting type, for example: government, catholic, independent, special schools and alternative education
  - ensure you are able to meet your placement requirements.

Following is a step by step approach to arranging your professional experience placements, which can also be found on our website:

**Arranging your Placement**

Arranging your placement can be a lengthy process so we strongly recommend that you familiarise yourself with the step by step guide which are listed below but can also be found on our website.

**STEP 1**

As a Swinburne Online education student you are required to provide appropriate Child Safety Screening Checks relevant to your State/Territory of residence – this is a requirement of your course. Once we have received and verified your Child Safety Screening Checks, we will then email you information which will help you arrange your placement.

**More information:**

- [Child Safety Screening Information](#)
STEP 2

You need to allow yourself as much time as possible to arrange your placement. You may wish to begin the process as much as two study periods in advance, or more.

More information:

- Placement Requirements
- Placement Resources - available in Blackboard

STEP 3

Establish the availability of appropriate education settings and begin arranging your placement. Remember to expand your search radius. Pre-service Teacher are expected to travel up to an hour to reach their placement setting.

More information:

- Types of Education Settings - available in Blackboard
- Australian School Directory
- Early Childhood School Directory

STEP 4

In consultation with the education setting identify a suitable Mentor Teacher.

More information:

- Selection of a Mentor Teacher Requirements

STEP 5

If you have successfully arranged a placement, secure your placement by completing your course Acceptance of Placement form. It is recommended that you list at least 2 different people from the education setting on this form. This form must be returned to Swinburne Online’s Professional Placements Team by week three of the Teaching Period in which you will be completing your placement.

Also make sure you are enrolled in the practicum unit for the placement you have arranged.

STEP 6

Before your placement begins, you should make at least one visit to the education setting to familiarise yourself with the policies, the Mentor Teacher and his/her philosophy and practice and most significantly, with the children to be taught. Please also notify the Professional Placement Team of any changes to your placement detail.

Please refer to the Education Community: Practicums and our Profession community site in Blackboard for further information.
Selection of a Mentor Teacher

The early childhood/education setting will be selecting the appropriate Mentor for your professional experience. However please note that there are specific requirements that need to be fulfilled.

Mentor Teachers:
- must not be a family member or close friend of the Pre-service Teacher
- must not have previously acted as a Mentor Teacher for the Pre-service Teacher

Early Childhood Setting - Mentor Teachers are expected to have an ACECQA approved degree. If the Mentor Teacher is not degree qualified, a person within the setting must have an ACECQA approved degree.

Primary School Setting - Mentor Teachers are expected to have a minimum of 3 years teaching experience and must be registered with the appropriate state or federal teacher registration body or College of Teaching.

Placements outside of Australia - Mentor Teachers must be a certified teacher with a minimum of 3 years’ teaching experience.

Confirmation of this is required on completion of the Acceptance of Placement form.

Types of Education Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Education Setting Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Teaching (Primary)</td>
<td>Primary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Primary)</td>
<td>Primary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education (Primary)</td>
<td>Early Childhood and Primary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood)</td>
<td>Early Childhood and Primary Schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary School Setting
- You can approach any primary school for your placement
- Please be aware that more than half of your placements must be completed in education settings that follow an Australian curriculum
- It is highly recommended that you complete each placement in a different setting, such as public, independent, catholic schools, special schools and/or alternative education philosophies
- We recommend that you complete at least one placement in a mainstream school.

Early Childhood Settings:

Long Day Care Centres
- Long Day Care Centres provide full or part time care and education for children from birth to school age and can also offer before and after school care
- Long day care services are required to hold a service approval or licence and must comply with national standards
- Services generally operate for at least 10 hours a day from Monday to Friday for a minimum of 48 weeks each year
- Children are usually grouped together according to their age and developmental stage
• Learning programs are designed and provided by educators who are required to hold relevant qualifications specified by legislation
• They can be operated by private, local government or community based management and ownership structures.

Kindergartens/ Preschools
• Each Australian state has a different approach to preschool. The names of services also vary from state to state
• Preschools offer sessional and part-time group-based programs for children three and four years of age
• Classes are provided by educators who are required to hold relevant qualifications
• Preschool isn’t a pre-year one program (‘year one’ is called kindergarten, preparatory, reception or pre-primary across the different states and is usually for children aged five or six)
• Preschool programs are sponsored by state or education departments and community organisations. They are also run as part of private or community-based child care centres.

Early Learning Centres
• Early learning centres are often attached to private schools and sometimes government schools
• They provide pre-school education and care programs and are often of a very high standard
• They sometimes provide education and care for children 0-3 years of age.

During your placement
• To be considered full time, Pre-service teachers must attend a minimum of 38 hours per week under the supervision of the Mentor Teacher(s). This also must include a minimum of 25 hours contact time with children per week. Attending full time gives Pre-service Teachers the opportunity to become fully involved in the life of the schools/settings.
• 100% attendance is expected. Any days missed due to exceptional circumstances must be made up.
• You can keep track of your attendance by using the Attendance Diary. This diary is for your records only and does not have to be returned to the Professional Placements Team
• Where ever you complete your placement you must be fully supervised and adhere to all requirements and regulations set by the education setting
• Swinburne Online does not send a representative to the education setting to observe your placement
• Education settings are paid industry standard rates for the supervision of Pre-service Teachers

Please keep the Professional Placement Team informed of any changes to your placement:
• your Pre-service Teacher Coordinator or Mentor Teacher details change
• you are unable to attend your placement due to an illness or special circumstance
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS COMMUNICATION PROCESS

For students who are undertaking a professional experience we have a formalised communication process that takes place for the pre-service Teacher and the Education setting before, during and at the end of the professional Placements experience.

Pre-service Teacher Communication Process
We will communicate via email to the Pre-service Teacher throughout the Professional Placement experience
- Confirmation of Acceptance Form
- 10 Days before Placement commences
- Mid-way of Placement
- End of Placement

Education Setting Teacher Communication Process
We will communicate via email to the Nominated person identified to receive the communication but also to the Pre-service Teacher Coordinator and mentor Teacher.
- Confirmation of Acceptance Form
- 10 Days before Placement commences
- Mid-way of Placement
- End of Placement

Professional Experience Assessment Reporting and Documentation Process

General Assessment Information
Professional Experience is a critical component of the Education course we offer. Professional Experiences are designed to be completed sequentially to enable Pre-service Teachers to build on earlier teaching/learning experiences and develop their professional skills and knowledge. The Professional Experience has a formal academic assessment component that must be completed successfully in order for Pre-service Teachers to complete the course. A suitably qualified and experienced teacher is responsible for the assessment of the Professional Experience; ideally this will be the Mentor Teacher, Pre-service Teacher Coordinator or a degree qualified teacher in the education setting who can take on the role of Nominated Supervisor.

The documents and assessment reports for submission during a professional placement experience are as follows:

Mid-point of professional placements experience
- Interim Assessment Report
- Support Plan (if required)

End of professional placements experience
- End of Assessment Report
- Claim for Payment Form
- Feedback form

At the conclusion of each Professional Experience the Mentor Teacher and/or the Nominated Supervisor is responsible for the assessment against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and completing the Professional Experience Final Report.

Throughout the professional Placement experience the Professional Placements Team will provide the education settings via the formalised communication process all the relevant information and documents that will be required to submitted. The assessment reports and support plans (if required) will need to be completed in consultation with the education setting and the Pre-service Teacher.
Assessment Process of Professional Experience

The Mentor Teacher’s role is essentially that of assessing, educating and supporting Pre-service Teachers in achieving confidence and competence in the teaching setting, their other interactions with children and in inducting them into the teaching profession. This includes assisting with planning and giving continual feedback. Mentor Teachers need to provide Pre-service Teachers with oral and/or written feedback, focusing on particular teaching competencies as well as teaching as a whole. Whether feedback is oral or written is at the discretion of the Mentor Teacher and the Pre-service Teacher. Feedback from lesson or learning experience observations can be added to the Learning Plan Early Childhood Setting and Lesson Plan School (these will be provided to you through the unit content).

The Mentor Teacher and Nominated Supervisor have the responsibility for assessing whether the Pre-service Teacher’s performance in the Professional Experience is adequate for a graduating teacher, assessed against Australian Professional Standards for Graduate Teachers. All assessment reports will be made available via a formal communication process for each professional experience.

Midway through the professional experience, completion of an Interim Assessment Report is required for all Professional Experience Units (except EDU30003), and if the Pre-service Teacher is likely to not meet all the standards and/or fail the Professional Experience, a Support Plan must be completed and submitted to the Professional Placements Team.

A Final Assessment Report is completed on the last day of Professional Experience. These reports must be discussed with the Pre-service Teacher and/or any Supervisors.


Each Graduate Standard statement documents a set of relevant knowledge and skills that can be realised in the various observable and often complex and non-observable knowledge and understanding, practices, products and performances required of teachers. The knowledge, practices, products and performances listed in the Graduate Standards statements are interconnected making the assessment process complex. The Project Evidence website provides examples of possible evidence for judging achievement of graduate standards 1 to 5 [1], relevant to each stage of practice (e.g. beginning Pre-service Teacher, middle Pre-service Teacher and Graduate level Pre-service Teacher), to support assessment of a Pre-service Teacher’s Professional Experience. The examples of possible evidence for judging achievement of graduate standards 1 to 5 is not an exhaustive list but suggests a range of practices and/or products that could count as evidence of having achieved each Graduate Standard at the level of practice appropriate to the Pre-service Teacher. The use of examples helps to ensure consistency in assessing Pre-service Teachers across all schools, and in all states.

Assessment policies and procedures

Education courses are offered within the framework of the assessment policies and procedures of Swinburne University of Technology[2].

---

**Formative Assessment**

The challenge for Mentors in making judgements about progress and performance is to have appropriate and realistic expectations. This is not necessarily an easy task. Individual perceptions, local contextual factors and the Pre-service Teacher’s experience all play a part in the mind of the teacher making judgments. Mentor Teachers may need to judge what a Pre-service Teacher should be capable of in a particular class or group at a particular stage of their training. Not all classes or groups are equally manageable or equally engaged, and it may be appropriate to give a Pre-service Teacher limited tasks in the early stages of their teaching experience.

In their first Professional Experience Pre-service Teachers will be doing a good deal of observation, both of their Mentor Teacher and of other teachers. At the beginning they may be given responsibility for brief teaching episodes and for working with individuals and small groups, rather than taking complete lessons or learning experiences. They gradually need to extend their experience to a full class in a variety of curriculum areas. In their final Professional Experience, Pre-service Teachers will need to be able to demonstrate the ability to take full responsibility for a required number of days.

Interpreting the level of performance is directly related to the stage of development of the Pre-service Teacher. Obviously, expectations of a Pre-service Teacher’s performance in their first or final Professional Experience will be different. Consequently, it is necessary to take into consideration the stage of training the Pre-service Teacher is at and the units that they have completed so far in their course. It is important to make judgements based on the evidence demonstrated by a Pre-service Teacher who is still learning both the roles and the skills they need.

Sometimes the Pre-service Teacher’s lack of experience and skills in managing a group of children will overshadow the evidence that they are learning to teach. It is important to have realistic expectation of a Pre-service Teacher who has had little time to develop a relationship with the students. However, we do expect that they will make every effort to design engaging lessons or learning experience that will achieve a well-managed group. We also expect that they will try to follow the education settings management strategies and those modelled by the teachers they observe during the Professional Experience. However, we do not expect they will exhibit the confidence and expertise that comes with years of experience.

Throughout Professional Experience, Pre-service Teachers should receive regular oral and/or written feedback informing them of their progress. Feedback about lesson or learning experience observations can be added to the Learning/Lesson Plan. Pre-service Teachers should be made aware of any aspects of performance that need to be improved as soon as they arise, so that they can make the necessary improvements.

**Successful completion of program**

Pre-service Teachers must satisfactorily complete all units in order to graduate. They must also satisfactorily complete all of the required days of supervised teaching practice before becoming eligible to graduate. Pre-service Teachers who fail Professional Experience through lack of the skills or personal attributes required for teaching will not be permitted to proceed.

At the successful conclusion of the final supervised Professional Experience, Pre-service Teachers will be signed off as ‘ready-to-teach’ by their educational setting-based supervisor and are able to apply for registration with the appropriate state or federal teacher registration body of College of Teaching.

Achieving this recognises that the graduate:

- Can function effectively as a beginning teacher in early childhood settings, government and non-government schools;
- Meets the standards for graduating teachers; and
- Understands the need to keep learning and developing throughout their teaching career.
**Interim Assessment Report**

Completion of an Interim Assessment Report is required for all Professional Experience Units (except EDU30003), at the midway point of the Professional Experience. The Interim report is a means of sharing feedback and an understanding of progress with the Pre-service Teacher. The Interim Assessment Report requires assessment of progress against the relevant National Professional Standards for Graduate Teachers and a discussion around this report.

**Interim Report – Progress against each Domain of Teaching**

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are grouped into three broad Domains – Professional Knowledge (Standards 1 and 2), Professional Practice (Standards 3, 4 and 5) and Professional Engagement (Standards 6 and 7). At the Interim Report stage, Pre-Service Teachers will be assessed as follows:

- **SP Satisfactory Progress** the student is making satisfactory progress towards this Domain at the level indicated.
- **WT Working Towards** the student is working towards satisfactory progress towards this Domain at the level indicated, or has not yet had a suitable opportunity to demonstrate competence in this Domain. In either case, this Domain may require attention in the second half of the placement (but no additional documentation is required).
- **CC Cause for Concern** the student is not making satisfactory progress towards this Domain at the level indicated. This Domain will require focused attention in the second half of the placement and a Support Plan must be submitted along with the Interim Report.

The Interim Assessment Report must be completed in collaboration with the Mentor and Pre-service Teacher and signed off by the Mentor. The Interim Assessment Report is submitted by the Mentor Teacher on day 10 of the practicum experience to Swinburne Online, Professional Placements Team. The professional experience setting should also keep a copy of the report for their records. If the Pre-service Teacher receives one or more CC results on the Interim Progress Report, the Mentor is required to contact the Professional Placement Team and complete the Professional Experience Support Plan. This is to be submitted to the Swinburne Online Professional Placement Team by the Mentor. It is required that the Pre-service Teacher is kept informed through all stages of assessment.

**Support Plan (student making unsatisfactory progress)**

The Support Plan is designed to be utilised at any time throughout the professional experience and should be used when Pre-service Teachers are not meeting the requirements of Professional Experience. If the Mentor Teacher considers that the Pre-service Teacher is at risk of failing to achieve the desired outcomes in the Professional Experience Team s/he should seek a second opinion from the Nominated Supervisor and/or Pre-service Teacher Co-ordinator.

It is essential that Pre-service Teachers be informed as early as possible in their Professional Experience about the areas where the Mentor Teacher has concerns. Early notification (both oral and written) reinforces the expectations of the specific Professional Experience and creates opportunities for the Pre-service Teacher to address the areas of concern.

If it appears that Pre-service Teachers could be at risk of not meeting requirements by the end of the supervised practicum period, the Professional Placements Team should be notified by telephone immediately and an Unsatisfactory Progress report and Support Plan is to be completed by the Mentor Teacher and Nominated Supervisor. This report documents clearly and precisely areas of concern and improvements needed and is the focus of a discussion between the Pre-service Teacher and the Mentor Teacher. The
report and corresponding support plan should be developed in consultation with the Pre-service Teacher Mentor and the Program Director.

Once the assessment report and support plan has been completed, the Professional Placements Team will respond to an Unsatisfactory Interim Assessment Report by phone contact and make suitable time arrangement for the Program Director/Academic Team to discuss and provide further support as negotiated with the education setting. An Unsatisfactory Interim Assessment Report is a warning of areas that need to be improved. It does not automatically mean failure.

Copies of the Unsatisfactory Progress Report will be provided to:

- the Mentor/Supervisor
- the Manager, Professional Placements and Program Director.
- The Pre-service Teacher

*Note*: The report will not be recorded on the Pre-service Teachers Academic Transcript.

Where possible, Pre-service Teachers who are not meeting the requirements should be identified early. It is important for Pre-service Teachers to have an opportunity to consult with their Mentor Teacher and Swinburne Online eLearning Advisor to develop strategies for improvement. Pre-service teachers should view the Interim Report and Support Plan as a way of identifying areas for improvement, support strategies and ensuring that the Final Report of the Professional Experience is Satisfactory. Pre-service Teachers also have the opportunity to consult with their eLearning Advisor and develop strategies for improvement.

In exceptional circumstances Pre-service Teachers may be deemed Unsatisfactory in a Professional Experience without first being identified as making unsatisfactory progress or after an Interim report was completed with a Satisfactory result. Document any serious concerns, complete the Support Plan attached to the Professional experience Interim and Final Report and notify the Professional Placements Team immediately.

**Stages of reporting unsatisfactory progress**

**Phase 1 – Reporting unsatisfactory progress**

Reporting concerns to the Placements Team and completing the Pre-service Teacher Interim Assessment Report and Support Plan promptly are important elements of the process of supporting Pre-service Teachers who are not making satisfactory progress. The Support Plan should articulate clearly the areas of concern and make recommendations for improvement.

The following are some examples of when a Support Plan should be completed:

- Failure to respond to feedback or directions from their Mentor Teacher, School Organiser of Teaching Practice or Principal;
- Lack of evidence of progressing to meet the expectations for the Professional Experience they are currently undertaking;
- Breaches of the philosophy or policies of the Professional Experience school, early childhood setting or of Swinburne University of Technology Policies & Procedures;
- Significant poor or inappropriate communication with children, families and/or other staff;
- Failure to provide adequate plans for teaching to the Mentor Teacher in advance;
- Unprofessional or unethical behaviour;
- Attitudes and behaviour that reflect disinterest in teaching as a profession.

It is recognised that with support most Pre-service Teachers will go on to improve and demonstrate evidence of development in the areas of concern.

---

Phase 2 - Reporting unsatisfactory progress

If within the outlined timeline the Pre-service Teacher continues to make unsatisfactory progress, the Mentor Teacher, Pre-service Teacher and the Program Director will discuss the areas of concern and determine possible reasons for lack of progress. An Unsatisfactory grade will be awarded for the Professional Experience and the Professional Experience/ Appeals committee will decide if the Pre-service Teacher can undertake a repeat of some or all of the Professional Experience. If a repeat Professional Experience is denied because of the Pre-service Teacher’s inability to satisfy the Professional Experience requirements of the course, they will be advised of alternative options for tertiary study.

If a Pre-service Teacher has completed the expectations for the Professional Experience they will pass the Professional Experience and not be determined as an ‘Unsatisfactory’ Pre-service Teacher for the next Professional Experience.

The Unsatisfactory Interim Assessment Report will not be recorded on the Pre-service Teacher’s academic transcript.

Final Assessment Report

The Final Report should consider the level expected for the specific professional experience and reflect the Pre-Service teacher’s demonstrated level of performance in each of the relevant Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. It should clearly articulate areas of strength as well as areas for improvement.

We place great faith in the Mentor and the Nominated Supervisor’s professional judgement and request an honest validation of the Pre-service Teacher’s progress and final assessment. Considering the level expected for the particular professional experience, Mentor teachers and the Nominated Supervisors (if required) are asked to make a professional judgement and assess the overall performance of the Pre-service Teacher.

For each of the standards, Pre-service Teachers will be assessed as:

- **0 Not demonstrated** the student has not demonstrated the professional standard at a relevant level. **If a Pre-service Teacher is awarded a 0 for any of the standards they must receive an UNSATISFACTORY overall result.**
- **1 Demonstrated occasionally** the student has been able to demonstrate the professional standard at a relevant level, albeit occasionally.
- **2 Demonstrated regularly** the student has demonstrated the professional standard regularly during their professional experience.
- **3 Demonstrated consistently** the student has consistently demonstrated the Professional standard throughout their professional experience.

Overall Performance will be assessed as:

- **Satisfactory.** A teaching performance that is satisfactory in assuming the professional responsibilities of a graduating teacher for this stage of practice. The Pre-service Teacher has not received a 0 for any of the assessed Standards.
- **Unsatisfactory.** A teaching performance that is not satisfactory in assuming the professional responsibilities of a graduating teacher for this stage of practice. The Pre-service Teacher has received a 0 for any of the assessed Standards and/or is deemed by the Mentor and the Nominated Supervisor to be not achieving the required level for the stage of practice.
- **Not completed.** Teaching performance has not yet reached a satisfactory level for this stage due to exceptional circumstances and will be dealt with on a case to case basis.
Exceptional circumstances
As a last resort Pre-service Teachers can be withdrawn from the education setting or school and the Professional Experience terminated at the request of the Principal/Director after consultation with the Professional Placements Team.

If in Program Director’s opinion the Pre-service Teacher’s conduct or performance in the Professional Experience has been Unsatisfactory, the Program Director can disallow the continuation of a Professional Experience.

If a Pre-service Teacher is withdrawn from the Professional Experience on the grounds that they are deemed Unsatisfactory when assessed against the Australian Professional Standards for Graduate Teachers, then a fail grade will be awarded for the whole Professional Experience Unit regardless of results in theoretical aspects of the unit.

Procedure for submission of assessment reports
The Professional Placements Team will provide you a link to be able to submit the Interim and Final Assessment Report and support plan (if required) via the formalised communication plan online to the Professional Placements Team by the Education setting. The Interim assessment report and/or Support Plan (if required) is to be used for the formative discussion and progress report midway and will need to be submitted at the midway point of the professional experience. The final assessment report is to be completed on the final day of the Professional Experience and signed off by the Pre-service Teacher and the Mentor Teacher and/or Nominated Supervisor. It is recommended that the Mentor Teacher and Pre-service Teacher Coordinator retain a copy for the setting and that the Pre-service Teacher retain a copy for themselves before submitting the final documents to the Professional Placements Team at Swinburne Online.

Passing grades cannot be given until for the Professional Experience Final Assessment Report form is received by Swinburne Online and the required number of days have been completed successfully.

Appeals
If the Pre-service Teacher feel that an action, inaction or decision that directly affects you and is perceived to be unfair or unreasonable has occurred then you have the right to make a student complaint. See Complaints, Reviews, Appeals and Feedback Policy for a full explanation of Swinburne University Policy.

Curriculum Planning, Implementation and Evaluation
Curriculum development
During the course of the Professional Experience Pre-service Teachers are required to draw on knowledge of child development and theories of teaching and learning to interpret observations and plan for children’s learning. Approaches to curriculum planning may vary according to teachers’ preferences.

Early childhood prior-to-school education settings
You are expected to participate actively as a team member in all aspects of the daily program and take increasing responsibility for:

- planning and implementing routines, transitions and appropriate learning environments;
- maintaining a safe and healthy environment for young children;
- interacting respectfully with children and their families.

You are also expected to use observations and documentation of focus children and the group as a basis for planning, implementing and evaluating learning experiences for individual children and small groups of children, and as a basis for developing accurate learning and development profiles of individual children.
School settings

In your first Professional Experience in schools, you may not teach many full lessons. As you gain experience you will plan full lessons and units of work.

You are required to prepare thoroughly for all lessons. You should:

- discuss with your Mentor Teacher all lesson plans, whole group learning experiences, small group work and planned individual interactions that you are scheduled to teach;
- reflect on the adequacy of your plan when later evaluating your performance;
- keep all planning and evaluation documentation organised systematically in your Professional Experience folder, which will include completed evaluations and all feedback comments provided by your Mentor Teacher.

Professional Experience documentation

Professional documentation is an essential component of the experience and will be used by the Mentor Teacher to inform the assessment of the Professional Experience. Pre-service Teachers’ must record observations, learning plans, learning experiences and lesson preparation, evaluation and reflections.

A template for Learning Plan/Lesson Plan will be provided through the unit content; however, Pre-service Teachers may prefer to use the planning documentation of the early childhood setting or school in which the experience is taking place or develop their own. The main purpose of this record is to provide a framework for the review of planning, implementation and evaluation of each experience.

Pre-service Teachers must provide Mentor Teachers with a hard copy of any planned learning experiences or lessons at least one day prior to implementing them. **Note: If these plans are to be submitted to Swinburne online as part of assessment, they will need to adhere to the specific requirements/templates outlined in the assessments.**

Further information about the specific Pre-service Teacher and Mentor/Nominated Supervisor expectations and assessments for each unit/practicum will be included on information forms for each practicum.

Formats for learning/lesson plans

Learning Experience Planning

You are expected to plan for all responsibilities when on Professional Experience, including whole group learning experiences, small group work, routines and planned individual interactions. To enable you to do this planning you have been provided with a template (through the unit content). This template is required for some of your assessments, however you are encouraged to explore the educational setting’s planning formats as well as develop your own as you gain teaching experience. Elements that need to be considered and included in your planning are:

**The Intended Learning Objectives**

These should be written in plain language and state the observable and measurable learning objectives of the learning experience.
The Children’s Prior Knowledge, Learning and Experiences

When planning a learning experience it is extremely important that you consider the children’s prior knowledge and experiences. If you do not know where children are starting from it is very difficult to know where to lead them. In addition, it is important for you to consider how you might effectively use this prior knowledge and experience as part of the learning experience that you are planning to ensure the best outcome.

The Learning Environment

The learning environment is a very important aspect of your learning experience. It is extremely important that you consider the suitability of the environment and any changes that you may need to make to the environment for your learning experience to work.

Equipment, Materials, Physical and Human Resource needs

Most learning experiences require extra resources. It is therefore important that you plan for these resources in advance so that you are not underprepared during the learning experience. In addition, you should think carefully about any safety issues that may arise during the learning experience and adjust appropriately.

The Introduction & Initial Motivation to the Learning Experience

It cannot be emphasised too strongly how important the introduction to a learning experience is for capturing the attention of your learners. This initial part of the learning experience is sometimes called ‘introductory focus’ and should be applied to EVERY learning experience.

The Body of the Learning Experience & Maintaining Motivation

Under this section you should plan the essential elements of your learning experience, including timelines and how you will maintain focus/motivation with your learners, teaching strategies that you will use and how you might make teaching adjustments that may be necessary during the learning experience. You should also plan assessment and extension activities to further challenge those learners who complete your activity early.

Concluding the Learning Experience

It is not satisfactory to just stop a learning experience without some sort of conclusion. It is therefore important to plan your conclusion thinking of all possible scenarios e.g. when the learning experience goes wrong, when you run out of time etc.

Evaluation and Self Reflection of the Learning Experience

It is extremely important as a teacher to reflect on and evaluate every learning experience. It is desirable to do this as soon after the learning experience as possible. This support your development. Space has been included on the Learning Plan/Lesson Plan, to record reflections.

Follow-up to the Learning Experience

Most learning experiences are not one off standalone sessions. Therefore it is important to consider how you will follow-up.

Mentor Teacher Comments and Pre-service Teacher Reflections

You should expect your Mentor Teacher to make feedback comments on a number of your planned learning experiences. Such critical comments are essential for you as a developing teacher. Try to take this advice on board without being defensive. Without such critical comments it is not possible for you to develop in this role. It is important for you to reflect on this feedback to accommodate the information for future use.
Planning and Feedback on lesson/learning experience plans

Mentor Teachers should provide detailed feedback on at least one lesson/learning experience each day. Whether feedback is oral or written is at the discretion of the Mentor Teacher and the Pre-service Teacher. Feedback from lesson or learning experience observations can be added to the Learning Plan/Lesson Plan. Observation of Pre-service Teachers’ performance generally involves three phases.

Stage 1 – Planning

The Mentor Teacher or OTP/Supervisor and the Pre-service Teacher discuss the written plan for the lesson or learning experience, including learning objectives, the learning environment, equipment, materials, physical and human resource needs, the introduction and initial motivation to the learning experience, the body of the learning experience and maintaining motivation and concluding the learning experience. The aim is to clarify the objectives and review the teaching strategies chosen, ensuring that the Pre-service Teacher clearly understands each aspect of the lesson or learning experience. The pre-learning experience discussion should be held sufficiently in advance of the proposed lesson or learning experience time to allow the Pre-service Teacher to make adjustments to prepared plans, if necessary.

Stage 2 – Observation of the lesson or learning experience

During the observation, the Mentor Teacher/Supervisor will observe the agreed aspects of the lesson/learning experience. Whether feedback is oral or written is at the discretion of the Mentor Teacher and the Pre-service Teacher. Feedback from observations can be added to the Learning Plan/Lesson Plan. Where notes are taken the Mentor Teacher records clearly what actually happens. The notes should be objective and descriptive in style i.e. use particular examples and actual questions. Mentor Teachers should be selective, that is, only a limited number of points should be raised at each feedback session.

Stage 3 – Feedback session

During this conversation the Mentor Teacher/Supervisor and the Pre-service Teacher discuss the information gathered. The Mentor Teacher may wish to identify important aspects of teaching from the observation, for discussion with the Pre-service Teacher. The Mentor Teacher can refer to the End of Experience/Placement Assessment Report for criteria on which to base their observations and assessment. The Mentor Teacher and Pre-service Teacher should each evaluate the lesson or learning experience, and the Mentor Teacher should then:

- analyse the collected information;
- highlight observed teaching strengths;
- provide constructive criticism of observed areas for improvement;
- guide the Pre-service Teacher in planning achievable goals for the next lesson or learning experience;
- feedback can focus on the extent to which the Pre-service Teacher is assuming the professional responsibilities of a graduating teacher;
- from the discussion, the Pre-service Teacher should be able to determine, with help from their Mentor Teacher, how the lesson or learning experience proceeded, and what is required for subsequent lessons or learning experiences.

Feedback from lesson observations can be added to the Learning Plan/Lesson Plan. Experience tells us that the Professional Experience is unlikely to achieve its desired outcomes unless the Mentor Teacher and Pre-service Teacher can develop a relationship based on clear expectations, agreed goals, honesty, tolerance and mutual trust.

Further relevant resources and information can be found and shared within online discussion boards and student lounges during practicum.