

PLACEMENT LEARNING CODE OF PRACTICE

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Placement Learning Code of Practice integrates external expectations and guidance contained for example in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B10 (Managing Higher Education Provision with Others, published in December 2012), ASET the Work based and Placement Learning Association Good Practice Guide for Work based and Placement Learning in Higher Education, the ASET Good Practice Guide for Managing the Health, Safety and Welfare for Student Placements and USHA, the Universities Health and Safety Association. It also builds on good practice developed across the University and across the sector.
- 1.2 The Keele University Code of Practice recognises that placements encompass a wide range of activities, and the Code is therefore broadly based to cover a wide range of placement types, at undergraduate, taught postgraduate and postgraduate research level. The Code of Practice sets out a shared understanding about the nature of placement arrangements wherever they occur and identifies the minimum requirements upon the University in this area to ensure it meets its responsibilities as a degree awarding body, and its duty of care¹ and contractual obligations to students and to placement providers. Within this Code of Practice are identified the roles and responsibilities of those who contribute to the operation of placement learning activities in some way, from governance requirements to the obligations of Schools, Professional Services, individual members of staff, students and placement providers. This Code recognises that good practice in placement learning is already well developed in several Schools, particularly where placements are a key component of a professional course or an integral part of the curriculum for most or all students. It is likely that for these Schools/Professional Services, their own placement procedures and requirements exceed those expressed in this Code of Practice. Hence the expectations expressed in this Code of Practice should be threshold standards to apply to all types of placement learning in the UK and overseas, and as such can be seen as complementing local procedures already in existence in parts of the University, its partners or at its appointed agents. It is expected that all Schools within the Faculty of Natural Sciences, and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences would work in partnership with the central Placements and Projects Team to ensure all expectations within this policy are satisfied.

2. SCOPE AND CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT

- 2.1 Given the wide variety of placement opportunities available across academic programmes at Keele University, it is a requirement that all staff involved in the design, coordination, or delivery of placements consult with the Placements and Projects Team within Student Services at the outset, with the exemption of mandatory and/or clinical placements within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. Engagement with the Placements and Projects Team is a prerequisite for initiating or modifying any placement-related activity and must be documented as part of the programme's quality assurance procedures.
- 2.2 If the Placement is study abroad and/or funded via Turing, colleagues should also consult with the

¹ Duty of Care is defined by JISC as the obligation to exercise a level of care towards an individual, as is reasonable in all the circumstances, to avoid injury to that individual or his property. According to JISC, [...an institution may find itself liable for any injury or loss to students who study abroad or undertake placements as part of their course.]. (Both from: JISC legal information, Duty of Care in Further and Higher Education Sectors, 2004). For further information, consult [JISC Legal Briefing](#).

Global Opportunities Team within Student Services.

This consultation serves to:

- Ensure access to up-to-date **information, advice, and guidance** on placement processes and best practices.
- Provide staff with a suite of **standardised resources and documentation** that align with the **minimum expectations** set out in this policy.
- Promote consistency, quality assurance, and compliance across all placement activities.

2.3 Each School/Professional Service offering placement opportunities may have different procedures, appropriate to the type of placement and placement provider. The principles and procedures outlined in this section represent the minimum requirements on Schools, Professional Services or Agencies arranging placements. Some may choose to adopt more stringent requirements due to the risks associated with the type of work undertaken at the placement, or due to professional body expectations. It is recognised that the interpretation of this Code and any procedures developed locally, should be proportionate to the type, length and estimated risk element of the placement.

2.4 Where placements are offered to students who study a Keele award as part of a franchise arrangement, the home institution of the student is responsible for all aspects of the placement provision and management. In these cases, this Code of Practice should normally be shared with the collaborative partner and the School / Professional Services responsibilities delegated to the partner. Collaborative provision contracts will, where the franchised or validated programme includes a placement element, clearly set out the responsibilities of each partner in relation to the roles and responsibilities covered in this Code of Practice. Where the placement is arranged for students by an appointed agent, the home institution of the student delegates responsibility for aspects of the placement provision and management to the agent and this will be set out in a formal contract. This should be informed by this Code of Practice but may differ, in key aspects, from Keele practice due to operational reasons. The partner agreements will set out in detail the responsibilities and legal obligations of the University for students on these programmes.

2.5 There may be placements to which certain aspects of this Code of Practice cannot be applied. One such example might be study abroad, or extra-curricular activity. In such instances, consultation with the Placements and Projects Team, and/or Faculty Placements Team within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, must be undertaken, and approval should be sought from the relevant School Education Committee. For all exempted placements, the placement documentation, such as handbooks and forms, will clearly set out what alternative arrangements apply and the rationale why certain aspects of the Code of Practice are not being followed.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 For the purpose of this Code of Practice, placement learning is defined as all arrangements in which a student pursues a learning opportunity away from the University as part of their academic learning and where this learning opportunity is provided by a body other than Keele. Based on the QAA definition of placement learning in Chapter B10 of the Quality Code as 'educational provision leading to an award, or to specific credit toward an award, of an awarding institution delivered and/or supported and/or assessed through an arrangement with a partner organisation'. This Code of Practice covers such placements in industry, those required for teaching education, experiences necessary for qualifications in Medicine, Health and Social Care professions, and continuing professional development. This Code of Practice also covers study abroad, including exchanges and mobility programmes such as Turing, internships and research placements.

3.2 There are a variety of types of placement learning, which are defined below. Many types of placement learning fall within the scope of this Code of Practice but there are others which do not. The key factor is whether the placement learning activity is credit bearing, necessary with regard to the student's ability to achieve the learning outcomes of their programme of study or develop the graduate attributes set out in the Keele Curriculum expectations and graduate attributes

The following types of placement learning are covered by this Code of Practice. *Please note that some placements can fall into more than one of the categories below. Some of the terms defined here may also be used in a different way for other purposes (such as 'internship') but for the purposes of this Code of Practice, the definitions apply as set out above.*

- **Study Abroad:** where academic study abroad is a compulsory or optional part of the programme of study.
- **Placement Year/ Sandwich Year:** where students gain work/industrial experience relevant to their course in the UK or abroad including placements through schemes such as the Year in Industry or Turing programme.
- **Practice Learning Placements:** where students develop the practical skills required for practice in a profession or other employment including clinical training and teaching experience in the UK or abroad.
- **External Research Placements:** where students undertake research projects in external workplaces as part of their programme in the UK or abroad.
- **Internships:** where students are undertaking a placement as part of their undergraduate or postgraduate programme of study, often at an advanced stage, such as the 'dissertation phase' in the UK or abroad.
- **Placements:** where students undertake a shorter or longer period of time, normally in a work setting. As a rule these activities involve the student working directly with an external organisation in the UK or abroad, and are brokered, or approved by the University. Other placements can include 'elective placements' solely organised by the student. These activities can take place on site, remotely, or on a hybrid basis, where the student reports directly to the placement provider.

3.3 This Code of Practice does not cover the following types of arrangements: (i) placements or internships which are arranged by or for students outside their University studies or (ii) placements or internships by or for graduates after their University course has finished

3.4 This Code of Practice applies to all placements listed in 3.2, regardless of whether they are paid or unpaid, procured by the University or arranged by the student.

4. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

4.1 The University in its Strategic Plan has committed itself to produce high quality global graduates characterised by a set of distinctive Keele Graduate Attributes which foster employability. To meet this objective, it has developed a comprehensive university-wide approach to student development and employability to enable every undergraduate student to have access to a placement opportunity and demonstrate these graduate attributes. As part of this commitment, the University has set targets to increase the number of students undertaking experiential learning activities, either as part of their programme of study or as part of the co-curriculum. The University aims to build upon existing internship, placement programmes and employment opportunities and engage with employers

supported by a central team within the Directorate of Research Innovation and Engagement, and the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Placements Team to assist Schools/ Professional Services in the delivery of effective and efficient student placements.

5. EXTERNAL REFERENCE POINTS UNDERPINNING PLACEMENTS

- 5.1 The QAA published Chapter B10 of the Quality Code in December 2012. The new chapter replaced the *Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 2 (Collaborative Provision and flexible and distributed learning) and Section 9 (Work-based and placement learning)*. The indicators in Chapter B10 which are particularly pertinent to placement learning arrangements are referenced throughout this document and are summarised in Annex 1.
- 5.2 For professional courses, Professional or Statutory Bodies will have additional requirements and expectations in relation to placements. It is up to the relevant Faculty/ Schools to balance these expectations.
- 5.3 ASET has been involved in promoting good practice around placements since 1982. ASETs Good Practice Guides are produced in conjunction with other experts and organisations in the sector, to ensure that the advice within is current, focused on practitioner needs, and easily accessible.

6. PROTOCOLS AND MECHANISMS FOR FAIR ADVERTISING OF PLACEMENTS

- 6.1 Where placements are offered or provided by the University or one of its Schools or Professional Services, the placements will be allocated in a fair and transparent manner, ensuring equal opportunities for students. To this purpose, the School or Professional Service needs to articulate and be transparent in how placements are allocated, particularly where only a limited number of placement opportunities exist. Students need to be clearly informed how/when/where opportunities are made available and what criteria will be used in the selection process.
- 6.2 In the case of international students who rely on a visa for studying at Keele, there may be Home Office-related restrictions regarding the length, nature and location of placements they can undertake as part of their Keele programme, and for some placement activity will require fortnightly monitoring to ensure engagement levels remain at a satisfactory level

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR PLACEMENTS

- 7.1 The University has Health and Safety Guidelines for Student Placements which were last approved in 2024. These are located via the University intranet, [Student Placements](#) and set out steps for placement identification and approval. The information provides health and safety checklists, guidance documents on Student Work Placement risk profiling, and briefing notes for the preparation of students going on placement. The University's guidelines are based on sector good practice and reflect guidance contained in the USHA Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education.
- 7.2 There can be no guarantees that individuals in a work environment will not suffer harm. The Health and Safety Guidelines were developed to raise awareness of the factors that can reduce the probability of an injury or work-related ill-health occurring to a student in a workplace environment. By referring to information contained in the guidelines, Schools/Professional Services and Placement Supervisors will be able to make informed decisions on health and safety issues relating to the placement.
- 7.3 The University Health and Safety Team can advise Schools/Professional Services on placement-related

health and safety issues and can be contacted via the [Health and Safety Team webpages](#).

- 7.4 Where placements are offered to students on Keele awards provided by a collaborative partner, it would normally be the health and safety guidelines of the partner which would apply unless specified otherwise in the contract.

8. INSURANCE GUIDANCE FOR PLACEMENTS

- 8.1 In order that Keele students are protected while on placement, it is expected that they are covered by (a) the placement provider's Employers' Liability insurance (EL) or equivalent that will provide cover for the placement provider's liabilities to the student; (b) personal accident, travel and health insurance; and (c) personal third party liability insurance to indemnify students whilst on placement.
- 8.2 In relation to employer liability insurance, as part of the risk assessment for each placement, the School/ Professional Service need to ascertain whether the provider has employer liability insurance (or equivalent) in place which will cover students on placement. In the UK, most placement providers will have this in place. The School / Professional Services responsibility is to carry out a simple check by asking the following question: Do you hold employers liability insurance, and does your insurance cover liability for injuries or sickness suffered by a placement student attributable to their duties within your organisation? (required)? If the answer is 'no', and the placement is in the UK, the placement should not go ahead. If the answer is 'no' and the placement is abroad, the student is to be advised that they would not be covered and that our travel insurance offers only limited compensation if they suffer an injury at work. Other placement opportunities should be explored as an alternative. For professional courses in Medicine, Health and Social Care, for UK placements this is addressed by agreements in place signed between the placement provider and designated signatory of the Faculty, which includes signing to agree there is Employer Liability Insurance.
- 8.3 In exceptional circumstances the University may be able to extend its own liability insurance to provide liability cover for a student on placement but this will depend on circumstances and the School or Professional Service should enquire with the University's Financial Services Manager on Insurance@keele.ac.uk. In all cases where students undertake a placement where they are not covered by employer liability insurance, it is the responsibility of the School or Professional Service to notify the University's Financial Services Manager so that a central record can be maintained to monitor cumulative risk.
- 8.4 In relation to travel insurance, all students who travel abroad on a placement are entitled to cover under the University's personal accident and travel insurance free of charge. The student will need to apply for this cover by contacting the University's Financial Services Manager on Insurance@keele.ac.uk. More information can be found [here](#).
- 8.5 In relation to personal third-party liability insurance, the University's personal accident and travel insurance covers students for legal liability where, as a result of the student's action, a third party has been injured or his/her property damaged. If students decide not to apply to be covered by the University's travel insurance, they need to ensure that any alternative arrangement provides comparable cover.

9. PLACEMENT AGREEMENTS

- 9.1 Each placement which forms part of a student's approved programme of study, be that a short work experience or a credit-bearing placement module, or placement year, must be underpinned by a

learning agreement / Standard Placement Agreement, signed by the provider, and the University, and in some instances, the Student. It will set out the expectations, intended learning outcomes, roles and responsibilities of each party involved.

- 9.2 This section and Appendices 3 and 4 set out guidance on learning placement agreements which must be followed in respect of:
- External Research Placements
 - Internships
 - Work Placements
 - Placement / Sandwich Years
 - Practice Learning Agreements
- 9.3 Annex 3 sets out a Checklist of all the requirements which must be met by placement learning agreements for the types of placements listed in Section 3.2 above. Schools or Professional Services may also wish to add in additional requirements, particularly in respect of specialist placements and Schools / Professional Services should ensure that they create an agreement which is appropriate for each placement. Schools or Professional Services should utilise the standard Keele placement learning agreements, apart from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, who are bound to follow the NHS England Funding Agreement, standard placement agreement template.
- 9.4 With the exemption of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, provided that all the “Essential” requirements of the Checklist are met, “Optional” requirements have been duly considered and all requirements of this Code of Practice have been fulfilled, the Placement Supervisor shall be entitled to sign off placement agreements on behalf of the University. All placement learning agreements must be signed by the University, placement providers and student before the placement commences. For the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, the Standard Placement Agreement is signed by the Placement Provider and Executive Dean of the Faculty.
- 9.5 Fully signed copies of each placement agreement must be retained by the School/Professional Service for six years in line with the University’s records retention schedule.
- 9.6 Agreements in respect of Study Abroad programmes and Placement Year / Sandwich Year programmes through the Turing scheme (or any other Turing-funded placements) may follow alternative arrangements and Schools/Professional Service should liaise with the Global Opportunities team in Student Services.

10. ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY OF PLACEMENTS

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of the School/Professional Service to assess, prior to approval of a placement opportunity, the suitability of, and risks involved with, the placement provider, its location, and of the placement opportunity offered by this provider. This responsibility applies to placements arranged/sourced by the School/Professional Service as well as those sourced directly by the students themselves. The School/Professional Service will need to ensure prior to approving the placement that the duration, available facilities and planned activities will allow the student to meet the learning outcomes identified for the placement / programme / module. This responsibility is normally devolved to academic members of staff or placement managers/University Supervisors.
- 10.2 With the exemption of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, where a provider has been identified by the University or an individual student to offer a placement opportunity, the

School/Professional Service is required to assess the risks of this opportunity on its merits in a structured way before the placement is approved, through a visit if possible or by evidence gathered by the student, accompanied by the completion of a standard checklist (for an example, see Annex 2). The process should be proportionate to the estimated risk, and in the case of regular placement providers, repeated at reasonable intervals. For the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, quality audits are completed which are governed by regulatory bodies if the University has sourced the placement and if the student has sourced, risk assessments are completed which have been mapped to the University health and safety guidance.

- 10.3 Where a student has declared a disability, the School/Professional Service is required to include in its assessment of the suitability of the placement, considerations regarding any reasonable adjustments which may be required for the student. Students should discuss any required adjustments either with the Placement Supervisor or [Disability Support & Inclusion](#) at Keele, or directly with the placement provider. Where such reasonable adjustments cannot be put in place, and as a result it cannot be guaranteed that the placement can be undertaken in a safe and academically meaningful way, the placement should not be approved. The School/Professional Service should give students ample opportunity to disclose their disability or their access needs prior to going on placement. If, however, the School/Professional Service becomes aware (and perhaps without the disclosure of the student) that the student may have a disability or have additional needs which may impact on their ability to access the placement effectively, the School/Professional Service should in the first place, make contact with [Disability Support & Inclusion](#).

Where a student embarks on a placement without having declared a disability, the University is not responsible for ensuring that reasonable adjustments are put in place.

- 10.4 The School/Professional Service will assess whether there are ethical implications associated with the proposed placement provider. The University's approach to ethical considerations regarding placements aims to ensure that student placements are managed in a socially responsible manner which reflects the [mission and values](#) of the University. The University's approach is based on the premise that the University's choice of where to place students should reflect the ethical values it espouses in public life. The University will seek to avoid placing students in areas which undermine these values. Staff should also follow the University [Due Dilligence Guidelines](#).
- 10.5 This assessment would normally be carried out by the Placement Supervisor/member of staff coordinating the placement. Where there are concerns about the implications regarding the ethical nature of a placement where there is some doubt about whether the University would wish to support this placement, the member of staff will usually seek advice from the Directorate of Research Innovation, and Student Futures.
- 10.6 Where a provider offers a standing arrangement with repeat placements for students on particular, often professional programmes, this requirement may be covered by an initial approval and subsequent periodic reviews of the provider by the University.

11. PREPARATION OF STUDENTS PRIOR TO UNDERTAKING PLACEMENT LEARNING

- 11.1 All types of placement, of any duration, which are part of the student's University course, will be preceded by a placement preparation session and / or activities normally arranged by the School / Professional Service for the student(s) prior to embarking on the placement. This may be in the form of an online / in situ workshop or training event or through the provision of a training handbook or exercises which students complete prior to undertaking their placement. Schools / Professional Services will determine the appropriate nature and shape of their placement preparation and will

ensure all students have completed this prior to their placement.

- 11.2 The purpose of the placement preparation will be, as a minimum, to develop in students a clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities whilst on placement and an understanding of the fact that they are 'representatives' of the University, even though they may well be treated as 'employees' while on placement, as set out in Regulation B1 (Student Discipline), or Regulation B5 (Fitness to Practice) as appropriate. While students may be treated as an employee, the student and placement provider should be clear that there may not be any employment relationship. The placement preparation will also cover all information students need to know regarding health and safety, learning outcomes and assessment requirements/criteria. Who to contact and what documents they need to submit, and the approval required to go on placement. If the placement is overseas, cultural awareness and appropriate safety protocols will normally also be covered.
- 11.3 As part of the initial approval process, the School/Professional Service will ascertain whether the placement provider will arrange an induction for the student(s) at the start of the placement. Where this is not the case or where the induction may be deemed to not be sufficient in relation to the level of risk involved, the School/Professional Service may opt to augment the induction itself.

12. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING SUPERVISION AND VISITS FOR PLACEMENT LEARNING

- 12.1 The Learning / Placement Agreement will stipulate how the School/Professional Service and placement provider will quality assure and supervise the placement.
- 12.2 As a general rule, with the exception of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, a placement longer than 3 months should include at least one visit, virtual or physical. For short placements, it may not be necessary to visit each student, however students and providers will be provided with specific contact details of their placement supervisor, and signposted to support services within the University should they need to make contact, including out of hours support. Supervision during placement periods may occur face to face, virtually, via telephone, or through email contact, and it is for the School/Professional Service to determine the most appropriate method, and frequency in each case. In the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Schools locally arrange student support throughout placements based on needs and requirements; this can be in person or virtually. Students, placement providers and staff are signed posted to a 24/7 Student Well-Being Support on Placements Framework, for round-the-clock contact mechanisms.
- 12.3 The learning agreement will also stipulate the local supervision arrangement at the placement provider. Each student on placement will need to be allocated a named supervisor or mentor at the placement provider who acts as the first port of call while the student is on placement.
- 12.4 Where students undertake placements for credit and are assessed in relation to (i) their performance on placement, (ii) a product created during the placement or (iii) reflections/portfolios resulting from the placement experience, the learning agreement or student handbook will specify who will be involved in the marking of the assessment.
- 12.5 If staff from the placement provider are to be involved with the assessment of students' work, careful staff development and induction into University regulations, marking criteria and assessment briefs have to be provided by the School/Professional Service. Where staff from the placement provider have the main responsibility for assessing students while on placement, the School/Professional Service will need to draw up appropriate moderation procedures and ensure that external examiners are able to verify the assessment outcomes.

13. COMMUNICATION WITH PLACEMENT PROVIDERS

- 13.1 It is the responsibility of the School/Professional Service to establish clear lines of communication with the placement provider in advance of any student embarking on a placement. As a minimum, each placement provider will need to be provided with details of who to contact at the University in relation to the placement. benefit from being provided with contextual information, such as details of the student's programme of study or the University's facilities, including Student Support Services, and out of hours contact information. The School/Professional Service should endeavor to provide as much information as the provider requests to allow the provider to arrange for an appropriate learning experience for the student.
- 13.2 Particularly where a provider offers repeat placements, the School/Professional Service should aim to maintain regular contact with key persons within the placement provider. It is good practice where possible for the School/Professional Service link person to develop regular communication pathways with established placement providers to strengthen arrangements and enhance placement opportunities for future cohorts.
- 13.3 Schools should clearly specify for students what the students' responsibility in relation to communicating with the placement provider is, both prior, during and after the placement.
- 13.4 Students on placement are covered by the University's [Student Academic Misconduct Code of Practice](#) . The purpose of that policy is to make staff and students aware of the University's expectations regarding students' engagement with their studies, including during times spent on placements, and to enable the University to discharge its duty of care by taking appropriate action where students fail to meet them. The University expects all students to engage appropriately with their academic studies, including during placement. Students not engaging are issued a series of warnings, which can ultimately result in withdrawal from the University and, for international students, the cancellation of their visa. To this purpose, the School/Professional Service will arrange for the placement provider to monitor the student's engagement and to commit to informing the University of periods of unauthorised absences.

14. EVALUATION OF PLACEMENTS AND WHISTLEBLOWING

- 14.1 The School/Professional Service should ask all students to provide feedback on their placement experience via questionnaires, focus groups or other appropriate ways. It is good practice for a School/Professional Service to use feedback from students who have completed a placement to prepare students about to undertake a placement. Schools/Professional Services should use feedback from both students and placement providers to determine the suitability of the provider for repeat placements to future students. This will also help troubleshoot any local issues and eliminate unsuitable placement providers.
- 14.2 The University encourages all students to be vigilant while on placement regarding poor or unsafe practice, particularly but not exclusively in professional areas. Students should be clearly informed, as part of their placement preparation, in the placement handbook or in their learning agreement, of the appropriate channels to use if they wish to register a concern or a complaint in relation to the placement provider. Students may also report any concerns either anonymously, or with contact details via the University Report and Support tool - [Report + Support - Report + Support - Keele University Report + Support](#)

14.3 Schools/Professional Services offering a significant placement element as part of their provision should advise students wishing to raise a concern to discuss this concern in the first instance with their Placement Supervisor. In addition, students may wish to contact, in complete confidence, a member of staff at Advice and Support at Keele (ASK) or Student Services. Involving Student Services helps to ensure that students can be given full emotional and practical support in this matter. Students may also report any concerns either anonymously, or with contact details via the University Report and Support tool - [Report + Support - Report + Support - Keele University Report + Support](#). In the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences students can follow the Raising Concerns on Placement Policy, which aligns with the University Report and Support process and a Faculty process for reporting additional professionalism and safety concerns.

14.4 All investigations of issues raised in this way by students on placement should:-

- Reflect the student's personal responsibility to identify and report concerns and when appropriate to participate in their follow up and resolution.
- Provide a mechanism to ensure public and child/patient/client safety (as appropriate) is paramount.
- Reflect the School's / Professional Services responsibility to support the student.
- Be timely in both reporting of and acting on the concern.
- Provide an institutional memory of the concern (audit trail and placement data base).
- Be a transparent, easy to use process.

14.5 Students should be assured that they can safely 'whistle-blow' without fear of repercussions or fear of not being taken seriously. Staff in Schools/Professional Services are required to treat any 'cause for concern' notification from students on placement seriously and have the responsibility of making enquiries with the placement provider to ascertain whether the concern was legitimate and, if so, what action to take. Faculties / Schools / Professional Services may have their own raising concerns process, supported by the [University 'report and support' system tool](#)

15. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PLACEMENT LEARNING

15.1 Students who wish to complain about matters in relation to the placement provider should be using the complaints procedure of their placement provider in the first instance wherever possible. Every attempt should be made by students on placement to resolve the issues on an informal basis. Issues should, where possible, be addressed orally to the member of staff at the placement provider who is most directly concerned. If the issue is raised with the member of staff concerned, they can often provide an immediate explanation or resolution. Students invoking the complaints procedure and feel they would benefit from support during this time may wish to contact, in complete confidence, a member of staff at Advice and Support at Keele (ASK) or Student Services.

Where this is not possible and/or where the placement provider does not have a complaints procedure or where the student's complaint relates to the University's support for the student before, during or after the placement, the student may access the University's complaints procedure as set out in [Regulation B7](#). The University has developed a four-stage complaints procedure to provide a clear route for making a complaint.

16. STUDENT CONDUCT ON PLACEMENT

- 16.1 While on placement, students are required to follow the policies and procedures of the placement provider, including any policy on confidentiality. Where placement providers have found students guilty of or have reason to suspect them of not adhering to these policies and procedures in a way which makes their continued presence in the placement setting untenable, the placement provider is entitled to terminate the placement. The placement provider and the University will liaise to decide what the consequences are for the student. In professional areas, it is likely that a student will be taken through a 'fitness to practice' procedure according to Regulation B5. Alternatively, or in addition, the University may invoke its Discipline Procedure under Regulation B1, and/or begin the withdrawal process if the student is based within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.
- 16.2 If the placement is terminated early either by mutual agreement between the student and placement provider and with the consent of the University or through no fault of the student, opportunities will be sought to allow the student to repeat the placement elsewhere for credit, however this may not always be possible.

17 STUDENT PLACEMENTS PROVIDED BY COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

- 17.1 For all matters relating to placements provided to students on Keele awards provided by collaborative partners, Sections 2 and 7 apply.

18. ANNEXES

Annex A: UK Quality Code Extract

Annex B: Sample Risk Assessment Forms and Health and Safety Checklists

Annex C: Placement Agreement Checklist

Annex D: Placement Agreement Template

19. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

Document Name	Placement Learning Code of Practice
Owner	[Name, job role and section]
Version Number & Key Amendment	1.3
Equality Impact Assessment Form Submission Date	[Date form submitted]
Approval Date	12 November 2025
Approved By	Director (Minor Edits)
Date of Commencement	25 June 2014
Date of Last Review	12 November 2025

Date for Next Review	12 November 2026
Related University Policy Documents	[List all applicable]
<i>For Office Use – Keywords for search function</i>	

ANNEX A: UK Quality Code Extract

UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education with others

(Extract of the Indicators most relevant to Placement Learning)

<p>Indicator 1</p> <p>A strategic approach to delivering learning opportunities with others is adopted. Appropriate levels of resources (including staff) are committed to the activities to ensure that the necessary oversight is sustained.</p>
<p>Indicator 2</p> <p>Governance arrangements at appropriate levels are in place for all learning opportunities which are not directly provided by the degree-awarding body. Arrangements for learning to be delivered, or support to be provided, are developed, agreed and managed in accordance with the formally stated policies and procedures of the degree-awarding body.</p>
<p>Indicator 3</p> <p>Policies and procedures ensure that there are adequate safeguards against financial impropriety or conflicts of interest that might compromise academic standards or the quality of learning opportunities. Consideration of the business case is conducted separately from approval of the academic proposal.</p>
<p>Indicator 5</p> <p>The risks of each arrangement to deliver learning opportunities with others are assessed at the outset and reviewed subsequently on a periodic basis.</p> <p>Appropriate and proportionate safeguards to manage the risks of the various arrangements are determined and put in place.</p>
<p>Indicator 6</p> <p>Appropriate and proportionate due diligence procedures are determined for each proposed arrangement for delivering learning opportunities with an organisation other than the degree-awarding body. They are conducted periodically to check the capacity of the other organisation to continue to fulfil its designated role in the arrangement</p>
<p>Indicator 7</p> <p>There is a written and legally binding agreement, or other document, setting out the rights and obligations of the parties, which is regularly monitored and reviewed. It is signed by the authorised representatives of the degree-awarding body (or higher education provider without degree-awarding powers arranging provision by a third party) and by the delivery organisation, support provider or partner(s) before the relevant activity commences.</p>
<p>Indicator 9</p> <p>Degree-awarding bodies retain responsibility for ensuring that students admitted to a programme who wish to complete it under their awarding authority can do so in the event that a delivery organisation or support provider or partner withdraws from an arrangement or that the degree-awarding body decides to terminate an arrangement.</p>
<p>Indicator 10</p>

<p>All higher education providers maintain records (by type and category) of all arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others that are subject to a formal agreement.</p>
<p>Indicator 12</p> <p>When making arrangements to deliver a programme with others, degree awarding bodies fulfil the requirements of any professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) that has approved or recognised the programme or award, in relation to aspects of its delivery and any associated formal agreements. The status of the programme or award in respect of PSRB recognition is made clear to prospective students.</p>
<p>Indicator 13</p> <p>Degree-awarding bodies approve module(s) and programmes delivered through an arrangement with another delivery organisation, support provider or partner through processes that are at least as rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny as those for assuring quality and academic standards for programmes directly provided by the degree-awarding body.</p>
<p>Indicator 15</p> <p>Degree-awarding bodies ensure that delivery organisations involved in the assessment of students understand and follow the assessment requirements approved by the degree-awarding body for the components or programmes being assessed in order to maintain its academic standards. In the case of joint, dual/double and multiple awards, or for study abroad and student exchanges, degree-awarding bodies agree with their partners on the division of assessment responsibilities and the assessment regulations and requirements which apply.</p>
<p>Indicator 17</p> <p>Degree-awarding bodies ensure that modules and programmes offered through other delivery organisations, support providers or partners are monitored and reviewed through procedures that are consistent with, or comparable to, those used for modules or programmes provided directly by them.</p>

ANNEX B: Sample Risk Assessment Forms and Health and Safety Checklists

The University has a duty of care to all its students when studying/researching/working both in the UK and abroad as part of their degree course. The law requires organisers of student placements to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that students are not placed in an environment where there are significant risks to their health and safety. To make this judgement organisers need to take account of various risk factors, including those associated with the work/study/research, location and individual students.

Some Schools/Departments already have health and safety procedures in place for managing student placements. The procedures below do not replace departmental procedures, however it we recommend they are reviewed against these procedures and the [USHA Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education Students](#) to ensure that they are of a similar standard.

Written communications with the host employer and student should clarify expectations and responsibilities in relation to health and safety. It may also be necessary to ask an employer to answer questions you may have regarding their management of health and safety.

We recommend the following statements (or something similar) are included in learning agreements or quality commitments:

- the **University** undertakes to provide general information to students on health and safety in relation to work and, where relevant, overseas travel.
- the **host organisation** undertakes to have suitable arrangements in place for health and safety, in compliance with relevant legislation and provide appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision for the student's health and safety as a volunteer or employee.
- the **student** undertakes to comply with the host organisations and University's health and safety requirements, and to report any health and safety concerns, accidents or incidents in which they are involved to the host employer and University.

Before a student undertakes study/research/work at a host location the Placements & Projects Manager/Coordinator must check that the placement provider has suitable arrangements for health and safety and ensure that they have appropriate insurance.

Some Schools/Departments have their own Employer Health & Safety Checklists to ensure the appropriate questions are asked to the placement provider before the placement is agreed. Below are examples of Employer Health & Safety Checklists that can be adopted by Schools/Departments or cross referenced against their own:

- [Employer Health and Safety Checklist: UK Placements](#)
- [Employer Health and Safety Checklist: Non-UK Placements](#)

To aid Placement Teams in assessing the potential risk of a placement the [Student Work Placement Risk Profiling and Employer Assessment Guidance](#) is available to help you to use a risk based approach to assessing the health and safety

arrangements of an employer. The action needed will depend on the risks associated with the work placement and the assessment guidance should be used to determine appropriate action.

Guidance Documents

- [Student Work Placement Risk Profiling and Employer Assessment Guidance](#)
- [Employer Health and Safety Checklist: UK Placements](#)
- [Employer Health and Safety Checklist: Non-UK Placements](#)
- [Briefing notes for the preparation of students prior to going on placement](#)
- [USHA Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education Students](#)

ANNEX C: Placement Agreement Checklist

Purpose

The terms of the placement agreement should be proportionate to the placement in question and each placement should be considered on a case-by-case basis. “Essential” requirements should be covered by all placement learning agreements.

The sample wording provided is by way of illustration – the School / Professional Service has discretion as to how best to incorporate the requirements into each placement agreement.

Structure

All placement learning agreements should ensure that the obligations of (i) the student; (ii) the University; and (iii) the placement provider are clearly set out and, if this is covered by more than one agreement, that each of the above parties is aware of the obligations of the other.

Requirement	Sample wording
Placement Information	
Essential	
1. Start and end dates of the placement	School to draft
2. Contact details (name, phone, email address, postal address) for (i) the placement contact; and (ii) the School representative responsible	
for the placement	
3. Identify the student’s supervisor at the placement provider.	
4. Full description of the placement project including: (i) its objectives; (ii) the activities to be carried out by the student; (iii) placement location; (iv) hours of work; and (iv) any written work to be produced by the student.	
5. Details of monitoring arrangements to take place during the placement, e.g. review arrangements, progress meetings, visits, feedback and/or appraisals.	
Practical Information	
Essential:	

6. A statement that the placement provider will provide an induction for the student.	<i>The placement provider shall ensure that the Student receives a comprehensive induction, including, without limitation, an introduction to:</i> <i>(a) placement provider procedures and practices;</i> <i>(b) health and safety procedures; and</i> <i>(c) the content of their role.</i>
7. The student and the placement provider have a duty to keep the University informed of any developments during the course of the placement.	<i>The placement provider and the student shall each promptly report to the University:</i> <i>a. any unauthorised absences by the student;</i> <i>b. any matters of concern relating to the student and/or the student's behaviour; and</i> <i>c. any incidents or accidents involving the student;</i> <i>d. any risk factors relating to the placement; and</i> <i>e. any other factors reasonably requested by the University.</i>
Optional	
8. Agreement by the placement provider to facilitate University visits if required.	<i>When requested by the University, the placement provider shall facilitate reasonable visits by University staff.</i>
9. A statement that the student will be subject to the placement provider's standard working practices.	<i>The Student shall be subject to the placement provider's standard policies and working practices, including policies relating to holiday entitlement and absence.</i> <i>The Placement Provider shall explain these policies and working practices to the Student and, where applicable, make copies available.</i> <i>The Student shall comply with these policies and practices.</i>
10. The student should take steps to ensure their own safety and well-being on the placement.	<i>The student should take all reasonable steps to ensure their own safety and well-being whilst on placement.</i>
11. The student should follow the	<i>The student should follow all reasonable instructions of the</i>
supervisor's instructions.	<i>supervisor.</i>
Legal / insurance Information:	
Essential:	
12. The placement provider shall be responsible for supervision of the student and for the student's day-to-day operational activities.	<i>The placement provider is responsible for appointing a supervisor for the student during the placement and is responsible for the student's day-to-day operational activities.</i> <i>The placement provider shall ensure that the Supervisor is aware of the terms of this Agreement.</i>
13. The placement provider shall hold public liability, professional indemnity and employer liability insurance which provides coverage for the student to an equivalent level as a placement provider employee (or student if applicable).	<i>The placement provider shall hold public liability, professional indemnity and employer liability insurance which provides cover for the Student, to an equivalent degree as is maintained for any [employee] or [student] of the placement provider.</i>

14. Confirmation that the placement provider shall comply with legal obligations, including local health and safety requirements.	<i>The placement provider shall ensure that it complies with all statutory obligations and maintains all insurances required by law. Without limitation, this shall include complying with all local health and safety requirements, as well as any reasonable health and safety directions from the University.</i>
15. Term of the agreement	<i>This agreement shall take effect on [insert date, which must be on or before the first date of placement] and shall remain in effect until the last day of the placement.</i>
16. Jurisdiction	<p><i>This agreement will be subject to the laws of England and Wales and to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts.</i></p> <p>If the placement provider is located abroad and will not agree to this clause, please consult the Academic Legal Services team in Research and Enterprise Services.</p>
Optional	
17. The University must be aware of the terms of any separate agreement with the student.	<i>The placement provider will not enter into a separate written contract with the student without the University's prior consent.</i>
18. The student is not an agent of the University.	<i>The student is not an agent of the University and has no authority to contractually bind the University, nor to give consent on behalf of the University.</i>
19. The student will not be an employee of the placement provider at any time during the period of the placement.	<i>The student shall not be, nor deemed to be, an employee of neither the University nor the placement provider during the placement.</i>
20. Confirmation that the placement provider shall comply with the Equality Act 2010.	<i>The placement provider shall comply with the Equality Act 2010 (as amended) and, without limitation, shall not discriminate on the basis of disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age.</i>
21. Confirmation that the placement	<i>The placement provider shall comply at all times with the Data</i>
provider shall comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.	<i>Protection Act 1998 (as amended).</i>
22. Statement regarding confidentiality obligations	<i>Each party to this Agreement may receive confidential information relating to staff, clients, products, processes, know how, research and/or business affairs of the other parties ("Confidential Information"). Except as required by law, or as set out in this Agreement, no party will disclose Confidential Information received as a direct result of the placement to a third party, without prior written consent.</i>
23. Intellectual property allocations	If valuable IP is likely to arise during the placement, please discuss with the Academic Legal Services team in Research and Enterprise Services.
Written Work	
Essential	

24. Confirmation that written work will be required from the student	<i>The placement provider acknowledges that the student's placement experience shall be used in support of a [report / dissertation / thesis] in furtherance of the student's university studies.</i>
Optional	
25. Copyright in written work for University course remains with student.	<i>Any copyright in any reports or publications produced as part of the student's university course will lie with the student.</i>
26. University provides no warranty in respect of any written work provided (if the placement provider is to use for other purposes).	<i>The University provides no warranty in relation to any reports provided, nor their fitness or suitability for any particular purpose.</i>
27. Student permitted to publish work arising from the placement.	<i>The student may wish to publish information arising out of the placement, subject to any reasonable conditions by the placement provider.</i>
Signatures	
Essential	
28. Signature on behalf of the University (Head of School), placement provider and student.	<p>Signed for any on behalf of the University: Signature: Name: Position: Date:</p> <p>Signed for any on behalf of the placement provider: Signature: Name: Position: Date:</p> <p>Signed by the student: Name: Date:</p>

ANNEX D: Placement Agreement Template

(please note this does not include clinical placements within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences)

Placement Learning Agreement

between:

UNIVERSITY OF KEELE of Keele, Staffordshire ST5 5BG UK (the **University**);

INSERT NAME OF PLACEMENT PROVIDER of **insert address** (the **Placement Provider**); and

INSERT NAME OF STUDENT of **insert address** (the **Student**);

(each a **Party** and together the **Parties**).

1. Definitions

- 1.1. **Placement** means the placement described in Appendix 1.
- 1.2. The terms **End Date**, **Start Date**, **Supervisor** and **Placement Coordinator** are all defined in Appendix 1.

2. Parties' Obligations

- 2.1. Details of the placement offered by the Placement Provider are set out in Appendix 1 and have been read and understood by all Parties.
- 2.2. The obligations of each Party in respect of this Placement are set out in Appendix 2.
- 2.3. Each Party agrees to use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that the Placement is carried out in accordance with the description in Appendix 1 and to carry out the obligations described in Appendix 2.

3. General Provisions

- 3.1. This Agreement shall commence on the Start Date and shall terminate on the End Date.
- 3.2. Each Party shall ensure that it complies with all statutory obligations and maintains all insurances required by law. Without limitation, no Party shall contravene the Equality Act 2010 (as amended) and shall take all steps required to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (as amended).
- 3.3. The Student is not an agent of the University and has no authority to contractually bind the University, nor to give consent on behalf of the University.
- 3.4. This Agreement and its two Appendices (which are incorporated into and made a part of this Agreement) constitute the entire agreement between the University, the Placement Provider and the Student in relation to the Placement. The terms of this Agreement cannot be changed without the written approval of all Parties.
- 3.5. This Agreement shall be subject to the law of England and Wales and to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts.

Signed for and on behalf of the UNIVERSITY OF KEELE:

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signed for and on behalf of INSERT NAME OF PLACEMENT PROVIDER

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Signed by INSERT NAME OF STUDENT

Signature:

Date:

Placement Overview

Brief description of placement	Insert summary description of placement This placement forms an integral part of insert name of degree course.
Placement Location	Insert address at which the placement will be carried out
Start Date of Placement	Insert date (Start Date)
End Date of Placement	Insert date (End Date)
Hours of Work	Insert
Placement Objectives	Set out the objectives of the placement
Activities to be carried out by the Student	Insert description of placement activities
Written work to be produced by the Student	Insert details of any written work to be produced, e.g. placement report, dissertation or thesis, including who will mark the work.
Placement Provider Supervisor Contact Details	Name: Position: Phone Number: Email Address: Postal Address: (Supervisor)

Placement Provider Contact Details (if different from Supervisor)	Name: Position: Phone Number:
	Email Address: Postal Address:
Keele Placement Co-ordinator Contact Details	Name: Position: Phone Number: Email Address: Postal Address: (Placement Coordinator)
Placement Visit, Contact and Monitoring Arrangements	Insert details of monitoring arrangements, e.g. visits, feedback forms, review meetings, appraisals, including dates. Describe contact expectations between University, placement provider and student.
Review of Placement Learning Agreement	[Consider if a formal date to review the Placement Learning Agreement is appropriate. If not, include the following statement: Any Party may request that the terms of this Placement Learning Agreement are reviewed at any time during the Placement, particularly if either the Student or the Placement Provider are not reasonably satisfied with the progress of the Placement.
[Insert placement specific arrangements if applicable]	[If applicable, insert details of any placement specific arrangements, e.g. payments, holiday arrangements, assessment arrangements].

Obligations of the Parties

Area	University	Placement Provider	Student
Induction	Provide appropriate pre-Placement information for the Student as reasonably required for the Placement.	Provide a comprehensive induction to the Student to ensure that the Student understands, without limitation: (d) Placement Provider practices and procedures; (e) health and safety procedures; and (f) the content of their role.	Attend and adhere to all reasonable instructions provided by the Placement Provider during the induction or during the course of the Placement.
Placement Content	Provide any information about the content of the Student's academic studies required by the Placement Provider.	Ensure that the Student's role supports the Placement objectives. Provide all training reasonably required to enable the Student carry out the Placement.	
Responsibility and Supervision	Provide appropriate support and guidance to the Student and Placement Provider as required.	Responsible for ensuring that the Student's day-to-day operational activities are supervised during the Placement and that the Supervisor is aware of the terms of this Agreement. Comply with all local health and safety requirements and comply with any health and safety requirements reasonably requested by the University.	Make the most of all learning opportunities offered on the Placement. Take all reasonable steps to ensure their own safety and wellbeing on the Placement. Follow all reasonable directions of the Placement Supervisor during the Placement.
Employment Status	The Student shall not be, nor deemed to be, an employee of either the University or the Placement Provider during the Placement.		

Working Practices		<p>The Student shall be subject to the Placement Provider's standard policies and working practices.</p> <p>The Placement Provider shall explain these policies and</p>	
		<p>working practices to the Student and, where applicable, make copies available.</p> <p>The Student shall comply with these policies and practices.</p>	
Support and Monitoring	<p>Provide information, advice and support to the Placement Provider and Student during the Placement.</p> <p>When required, carry out monitoring visits during the course of the Placement.</p>	<p>Provide ongoing feedback during the Placement to the University and the Student.</p> <p>Support the monitoring arrangements described in Appendix 1.</p> <p>When requested by the University, facilitate reasonable visits by University staff.</p> <p>Remain in contact with the University by phone and email.</p>	<p>Seek feedback and clarification from the Placement Provider and University on an ongoing basis where required.</p> <p>Remain in contact with the University by phone and email.</p>
Insurance (To be confirmed once insurance arrangements are finalised)		<p>Hold public liability, professional indemnity and employer liability insurance which provides cover for the Student, to an equivalent degree as is maintained for any employee of the Placement Provider.</p> <p>Cover to and from work?</p>	<p>If the Placement is taking place outside the UK, the Student shall purchase a comprehensive personal travel policy before leaving the UK, to include personal accident insurance, medical insurance and personal liability insurance.</p>
Confidentiality	<p>Each party to this Agreement may receive confidential information relating to staff, clients, products, processes, know how, research and/or business affairs of the other party (Confidential Information). Except as required by law, or as set out in this Agreement, no party will disclose Confidential Information received as a direct result of the placement to a third party without prior written consent.</p> <p>The Student shall be entitled to use information arising from the Placement towards any written work required by the University. If this requires the use of any Confidential Information, any personal data shall be anonymised and the written work shall be treated as confidential by the University and/or Student.</p>		

Intellectual Property	<p>All patents, registered designs, copyright, database rights, know-how and any similar right (Intellectual Property) produced or developed by the Student during the Placement without intellectual input from the University shall belong to the Placement Provider.</p> <p>Copyright produced by the Student in any written work required for the Student's studies</p>
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	shall remain with the Student.	
Reporting		<p>Promptly report to the University Placement Coordinator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) any absence by the Student; (b) any matters of concern relating to the Student, or the Student's behaviour and wellbeing/safety; and (c) any incidents of accidents involving the Student; (d) any risk factors identified in relation to the Placement; and (e) any other matters reasonably requested by the University.