



SUITABILITY FOR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT (EDUCATION) POLICY

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Responsible Officer:	Registrar	
Review:	Academic Quality Assurance Committee	

Any person who requires assistance in understanding any aspect of this document should contact the Responsible Officer

1. Overview

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the minimum requirements and expectations held of Pre-Service Teachers when entering Professional Experience placements within external learning sites (schools). The aim of this policy is to provide a pathway for Tabor staff to identify, document, communicate and manage concerns about Pre-Service Teachers' capacity and fitness to enter professional learning sites where there is concern or evidence to suggest that minimum requirements and expectations are not being met.

2. Scope and Applications

This policy applies to all Pre-Service Teachers enrolled in an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) course within the Faculty of Education, Tabor. This policy directs staff when identifying, documenting, communicating and managing concerns about the fitness or capacity of Pre-Service Teachers to undertake Professional Experience placements. These concerns specifically relate to perceived or identified risks presented by Pre-Service Teachers undertaking or remaining within a Professional Experience placement within an external learning site where children and young people, including vulnerable groups, will have direct contact with the Pre-Service Teacher.

3. Policy Principles

3.1. Pre-Service Teachers are expected to demonstrate progressive development within the domains of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement as they move towards career entry and the meeting of Graduate Standard of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) (AITSL, 2011). These Standards are:

- Standard 1: Knows students and how they learn;
- Standard 2: Know the content and how to teach it;

- Standard 3: Plan and implement effective teaching and learning;
 - Standard 4: Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments;
 - Standard 5: Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning;
 - Standard 6: Engage in Professional Learning;
 - Standard 7: Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community.
- 3.2. Progress towards the Graduate Standard of the APST will vary between Pre-Service Teachers. This growth and development reflects the experiences, capacity and application of Pre-Service Teachers. It also reflects the continuous nature of growth and development of Pre-Service Teachers as they progress through their course. However, at the completion of their course, it is expected that all Pre-Service Teachers will be able to evidence their meeting of the Graduate Standards of the APST through Professional Experience placement and coursework.
- 3.3. Pre-Service Teachers are required to successfully complete Professional Experience placements as a core component of their ITE course. Within these authentic learning settings, Pre-Service Teachers are required to meet the legal, professional, behavioural, ethical and moral requirements set for all employed and voluntary staff, as well as meet the specific requirements of their course.
- 3.4. Pre-Service Teachers are required to obtain (at their expense) the relevant mandated criminal history screening clearances and complete all mandated training relating to their course, prior to commencing a Professional Experience placement.
- 3.4.1. Required or mandated clearances and training may be set by individual schools, systems or other regulatory bodies, as they deem necessary.
- 3.4.2. Pre-Service Teachers will not be provided with placement details until this has been complied with.
- 3.5. During Professional Experience placements, Pre-Service Teachers are required to: observe teachers and teaching; facilitate individual, small group and whole class teaching and learning episodes; interact with students and staff; participate in a range of tasks associated with their teaching role both within and outside of school hours; manage complex tasks; respond to dynamic and sometimes unpredictable scenarios and behaviours of others; manage their emotional responses to experience; follow school policies and procedures; and, effectively and productively contribute to the role of their Mentor Teachers.
- 3.6. Concerns about the suitability of Pre-Service Teachers to undertake Professional Experience placements may be identified by experienced educators. These concerns may relate to deficiencies in knowledge base, skills, practices or other suitability for the pre-service teaching role. Concerns may also relate to Pre-Service Teachers presenting foreseeable risk to the students and vulnerable people with whom they will interact during a Professional Experience placement.
- 3.6.1. Experienced teacher educators and professional staff within the Faculty of Education are aware of the roles, responsibilities and expectations held of Pre-Service Teachers. They may identify concerns about a Pre-Service Teacher's suitability for placement during on-campus preparation for Professional Experience placements or during placements within Professional Experience sites.
- 3.6.2. Principals, school leaders, mentor teachers and Tabor Professional Experience Liaisons regularly provide essential information in relation to the suitability of Pre-Service Teachers for Professional Experience placements during placements.
- 3.6.3. Administrative and support staff may raise concerns about the suitability of Pre-Service Teachers for Professional Experience placements through incidental interactions and observations through the course of their role within the Faculty of Education.

- 3.6.4. Concerns about the suitability of Pre-Service Teachers may be raised by community members who come into contact with Pre-Service Teachers within or outside of their ITE course.
- 3.7. Concerns relating to the suitability of Pre-Service Teachers to undertake or remain within a Professional Experience placement may include, but are not limited to:
 - 3.7.1. An inability to interact, cooperate or respond professionally and appropriately to staff, students, peers or community members;
 - 3.7.2. Demonstrated inappropriate attitudes, practices or communications that are contrary to professional and ethical codes of practice held by the profession of teaching;
 - 3.7.3. Demonstrated inappropriate behaviours, practices or actions that are contrary to published professional and ethical codes of practice held by a Tabor partner school;
 - 3.7.4. Alleged breaches of confidentiality in relation to sensitive information about Professional Experience schools, their staff or students;
 - 3.7.5. Inappropriate use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) or social media platforms;
 - 3.7.6. Serious deficiencies in relation to required knowledge of learning area-specific curriculum, other aspects of the Australian Curriculum and/or contemporary pedagogical practices;
 - 3.7.7. Absence from Professional Experience placement without satisfactory explanation, approved leave or the necessary documentation;
 - 3.7.8. Impairment or illness that may impact on the Pre-Service Teacher's capacity to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and maintain a duty of care for the students with whom they are required to work;
 - 3.7.9. Alleged breaches of Tabor regulations, procedures or code of conduct for students;
 - 3.7.10. Alleged breaches of school policies, practices or regulations;
 - 3.7.11. Alleged breaches of the law, including issues relating to child protection.
- 3.8. Where staff or individuals have concerns about the suitability of a Pre-Service Teacher for Professional Experience placements, these concerns need to be documented in the Notification of Concern form.
- 3.9. In some instances and in response to circumstances, a principal or school leader or the Professional Experience Coordinator may determine that a Pre-Service Teacher is required to leave the school and discontinue a Professional Experience without notice. In these circumstances, the Pre-Service Teacher would be removed from that placement immediately and a Notification of Concern form would be completed.
 - 3.9.1. The Professional Experience Coordinator will review all information in relation to this closure of the placement to assess and determine any further appropriate actions and/or implications. This review would include determining an appropriate assessment outcome of the placement and any implications for future suitability for Professional Experience placements within school environments.
 - 3.9.1.1. The Faculty of Education may determine that it is not appropriate to place a Pre-Service Teacher in another school or other Professional Experience setting in any instance due to the identified concerns about performance, personal or professional conduct of the Pre-Service Teacher.
 - 3.9.1.2. Pre-Service Teachers who have been deemed unsuitable to commence or continue a Professional Experience placement will need to meet with the Dean of Faculty or delegate to amend their study pathway. Successful completion of all Professional Experience placements is a requirement of ITE

courses. Consequently, any Pre-Service Teacher unable to fulfil this requirement would not be eligible to complete an ITE course.

- 3.10. All Pre-Service Teachers have areas for continued professional growth and development and Professional Experience placements are important opportunities within the ITE course for these areas of need to be identified and emphasised. Pre-Service Teachers who have significant deficiencies in one or more area of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice or Professional Engagement (Australian Professional Standards for Teachers) may be identified as at risk of successfully completing their Professional Experience placement.
 - 3.10.1. At-risk identification of a Pre-Service Teacher during a Professional Experience placement is not, in most circumstances, an indication of a lack of suitability for placement.
 - 3.10.2. In circumstances where Pre-Service Teachers are deemed at risk of successfully meeting the expectations and requirements of a Professional Experience placement, an At-Risk Identification form needs to be completed and lodged with the Professional Experience Coordinator.

4. Procedures

- 4.1. Concerns about the suitability of a Pre-Service Teacher for Professional Experience placements need to be directed to the Professional Experience Coordinator as soon as concerns are identified.
 - 4.1.1. When Tabor staff (academic, adjunct, professional or administrative) raise concerns about the suitability of a Pre-Service Teacher for placement, these concerns need to be documented using the Notification of Concern form and forwarded to the Professional Experience Coordinator with any supporting evidence.
 - 4.1.2. When external staff or community members (school leaders, school coordinators, mentor teachers, others) raise concerns through Tabor staff, they need to be directed to the Professional Experience Coordinator to discuss and document concerns.
- 4.2. Review of concerns raised will be conducted initially by the Professional Experience Coordinator, in consultation with staff raising the concerns and the Pre-Service Teacher. Further supporting evidence will be sought from all parties during this process.
 - 4.2.1. Where concerns are deemed negligible or unsubstantiated, the concerns will be documented and stored in the Pre-Service Teacher's e-file. While there may be no impact on the continuation or initiation of a placement;
 - 4.2.1.1. The Professional Experience Coordinator may determine that concerns raised warrant a review period and the collection of further evidence. This will be communicated directly to the Pre-Service Teacher and a timeline for review will be set as well as requirements for continuation in an existing placement or the process for securing a future placement.
 - 4.2.1.2. Where concerns are deemed negligible but require action on the part of the Pre-Service Teacher to undertake further training or development to address concerns, these will be communicated to the Pre-Service Teacher directly during this process.
 - 4.2.2. Where concerns are assessed by the Professional Experience Coordinator as identifying the Pre-Service Teacher unsuitable for undertaking or continuing a Professional Experience placement, this assessment will be communicated to the Dean of Faculty with supporting documentation.
 - 4.2.3. Where the Dean of Faculty determines that concerns raised warrant withdrawal from a Professional Experience placement or exclusion from an upcoming placement;

- 4.2.3.1. This decision will be communicated to the Pre-Service Teacher directly.
- 4.2.3.2. Where possible, the Pre-Service Teacher will be asked to attend a meeting on campus to receive this information and determination.
- 4.2.3.3. Where a Professional Experience placement needs to be terminated on site, due to the nature or timing of concerns raised, the Professional Experience Coordinator (or delegate) will attend the site to facilitate this process.
- 4.2.3.4. In the event of a termination of placement, Pre-Service Teachers will be directed to the counselling services available through Tabor.
- 4.2.3.5. Relevant information relating to the termination of the placement will be communicated directly to the school leadership, in confidence.
- 4.2.3.6. All documentation relating to the closure of a Professional Experience placement will be stored on the Pre-Service Teacher's e-file.
- 4.2.4. Where concerns and review warrant the removal of a Pre-Service Teacher from a Professional Experience placement or exclusion from securing a Professional Experience placement, a subsequent placement will not be secured until the following conditions have been met:
 - 4.2.4.1. The Pre-Service Teacher will need to evidence that previously raised concerns have been sufficiently addressed, and/or
 - 4.2.4.2. The Pre-Service Teacher provides written evidence to demonstrate the concerns raised do not present risk to future students, supervising educators, peers or others, and/or
 - 4.2.4.3. The Pre-Service Teacher provides written evidence to demonstrate that they have responded to concerns raised and have undertaken considerable learning to sufficiently address those gaps in knowledge, skills and practice, and/or
 - 4.2.4.4. The Pre-Service Teacher provides written evidence that the concerns raised have abated and that they no longer present the same level of concern for meeting the requirements and expectations of a rigorous Professional Experience placement.
- 4.3. Where necessary, relevant information will be shared with Police and regulatory bodies.
- 4.4. Identification of a Pre-Service Teacher at risk of successfully completing their Professional Experience placement needs to be communicated to the Professional Experience Coordinator as soon as possible.
 - 4.4.1. Concerns about a Pre-Service Teacher being at risk of successfully completing their placement need to be documented by the supervising Mentor Teacher, Faculty Coordinator and Tabor Professional Experience Liaison using the At-Risk Identification form.
 - 4.4.2. This At-Risk Identification will be forwarded to the Professional Experience Coordinator as soon as possible after completion.
 - 4.4.3. At-Risk Identification may occur as part of the first round table meeting (as detailed within the **Professional Experience Participant Handbook**), scheduled within each Professional Experience placement, or in response to a significant incident or concerns that arise outside of this scheduled review process.
 - 4.4.4. The Tabor Professional Experience Coordinator will facilitate a meeting with the Mentor Teacher, Faculty Coordinator and Pre-Service Teacher to communicate this information to the Pre-Service Teacher as soon as possible after initial concerns have been communicated.

- 4.4.4.1. At this meeting, the Mentor Teacher and/or Faculty Coordinator and Professional Experience Liaison will provide specific written outcomes required from the Pre-Service Teacher to address the areas of concern raised. The Pre-Service Teacher will also be given a review period of no more than one (1) week to provide evidence of sufficient growth in areas identified.
- 4.4.5. A review meeting will be convened for the Mentor Teacher and/or Faculty Coordinator, Professional Experience Coordinator and Pre-Service Teacher, no more than one (1) week after sharing the contents of the At-Risk Notification.
 - 4.4.5.1. If the Pre-Service Teacher has demonstrated evidence of sufficient growth to address the concerns raised, they will continue in the current placement as per usual Professional Experience placement expectations and timeline.
 - 4.4.5.2. If the Pre-Service Teacher has not demonstrated evidence of sufficient growth to address the concerns raised, they will be immediately removed from the placement. A Fail grade will be applied to the placement. Enrolment and placement in any future Professional Experience placement will be subject to clause 4.2.4.

5. Definitions

See [Global Definitions](#)

6. Communication and Training

- 6.1. All Faculty of Education Professional Experience administration staff will be provided designated training in the policy by the Professional Experience Coordinator. This will include being directed to the policy via Tabor's online site and elaboration of the policy and appendices.
 - 6.1.1. New Faculty of Education academic and administrative staff will be directed to the digital location of the policy and provided with training on the policy and practices as required.
 - 6.1.2. Professional Experience Liaison staff will receive training in this policy prior to their next supervision role and a refresher training in this policy prior to the commencement of subsequent Professional Experience placements for which they are employed.