

Suitability for Professional Experience Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The University is committed to supporting students to become safe and successful practitioners in the workplace through undertaking professional experience activities.

(2) This Policy aims to identify, as early as possible, any concerns about a student's suitability for professional experience – namely, their capacity to successfully engage in professional experience activities, particularly Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activities which form a formal and assessed component of a QUT course ([Work Integrated Learning Policy](#)). The University aims to implement appropriate strategies early, to address concerns about a student's suitability for professional experience, in order that the student may be supported to undertake and successfully complete the professional experience activity, where possible.

Section 2 - Application

(3) This Policy applies to all students who engage in professional experience activities through QUT.

(4) The Policy applies to concerns about a student's suitability for professional experience as they relate to Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activities (e.g. placements, projects, field trips, study tours) which form a formal and assessed component of a QUT course ([Work Integrated Learning Policy](#)). The policy may also be applied to professional experience activities outside of the curriculum which have been organised through QUT (e.g. not for credit work experience).

(5) This Policy does not apply to professional experience activities which QUT students have organised themselves without the involvement and approval of the University.

(6) Where there are concerns that a student's behaviour may fall below the standards required of students under the QUT [Code of Conduct - Student](#), it may be necessary to address the concerns under the [Management of Student Misconduct Policy](#) or the [Suitability to Study Policy](#), as relevant.

(7) Where there is any doubt, the Vice-President (Administration) and University Registrar will determine which University policies or procedures apply to a specific student matter.

Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Vice-President (Administration) and University Registrar	Makes a determination about whether this Policy or another University policy or procedure applies to a particular student matter, where there is any doubt.
Faculty Executive Dean (for WIL activities which form a formal and assessed component of a QUT course) Relevant Responsible Officer (for other professional experience activities in relation to which the officer has oversight)	Makes a determination under this Policy about whether a student may engage in a particular professional experience activity in relation to which there are concerns about the student's suitability for professional experience.

Heads of School or equivalent/Heads of Department or independent section	Receives reports of concerns about a student's suitability for professional experience and refers the matter to the Executive Dean (or Relevant Responsible Officer where applicable) where there is a reasonable concern that the student may not be suitable for professional experience.
Appeals Committee	Determines appeals by students against a suitability for professional experience decision made by an Executive Dean.

Section 4 - Principles

(8) The University recognises the importance of students engaging in professional experience activities in order to develop the knowledge, competencies and attributes required of a profession.

(9) In providing these activities, the University has a duty of care to all students and those they come into contact with whilst engaged in the activities, with respect to their health, safety and wellbeing. The University is committed to meeting its legislative responsibilities with respect to health, safety and unlawful discrimination, and recognises the need to manage risks associated with [Work Integrated Learning](#) (WIL). The University will make reasonable adjustments to enable participation in these professional experiences ([Disability Policy](#)); however, students may be prevented or removed from undertaking these professional experiences where no reasonable adjustments can be made to counter risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of the student and/or others.

(10) The University recognises that a period of being unsuitable for professional experience may be temporary or long term and each case requires individual management, which may include the provision of reasonable adjustments and/or student academic concessions ([Student Academic Concessions Policy](#)). If it becomes apparent that a student may not be able to meet the inherent requirements (refer to the Exemptions Section of the [Disability Policy](#)) of a course in the long term, despite the provision of reasonable adjustments, the University will provide access to advice on the options available to the student, such as deferring study, leave of absence, or alternative study options.

Section 5 - Suitability for Professional Experience

(11) Permission to attend a professional experience activity is granted when a student meets any academic and/or other eligibility requirements prescribed by the responsible area and the professional experience provider; and there are no concerns about the student's suitability for professional experience at that time.

(12) A student may be deemed unsuitable for professional experience where there are concerns at the time that, if undertaking a particular professional experience activity:

- a. they may pose a risk to the health, safety and/or wellbeing of themselves and/or others;
- b. they may pose a risk of adversely affecting the University, or its professional experience providers;
- c. they may adversely affect the teaching, learning and/or experience of others;
- d. they may adversely affect the day-to-day activities of the professional experience provider, including its staff, clients or others with whom the student comes into contact;
- e. there are no reasonable adjustments available to enable a student with a disability, injury or health condition to meet the inherent requirements of the professional experience activity; and
- f. they may be unable to meet the requirements of student/trainee practitioners within the particular profession.

Section 6 - Procedure

Professional Experiences within Curriculum

(13) Where there is a reasonable concern that a student may not, at the time, be suitable for professional experience, in relation to a particular Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activity which forms a formal and assessed component of a QUT course ([Work Integrated Learning Policy](#)), the matter must be brought to the attention of the student as soon as possible by an appropriate staff member within the Faculty, along with the reasons for the concerns. Consideration should then be given by the Faculty to any appropriate strategies which may be implemented, where possible, in order to address the concerns about the student's suitability for professional experience, prior to their engagement (or re-engagement) in the activity. Where the student has an existing Access Equity Plan, the responsible area must consult with Disability Services to consider the adequacy of any existing reasonable adjustments.

(14) Students should be advised about any options available to them, as alternatives to proceeding with the particular WIL activity at that time, such as deferring a unit or alternative study options; or any concessions ([Student Academic Concessions Policy](#)) which they may be able to access.

(15) Where concerns remain about a student's suitability for professional experience (including after the implementation of strategies where possible) and they will not be pursuing alternative options to undertaking the activity (in accordance with clause 14 above), the matter must be escalated to the Head of School or equivalent for the course, who will provide a written report to the Executive Dean, which describes the concerns, any strategies which have been implemented to address them, any alternative options which have been explored and why a reasonable concern remains that the student may not be suitable for professional experience at that time.

(16) After consideration of the Head of School's report, if the Executive Dean considers that the student may not be suitable for professional experience, they will write to the student outlining why there are concerns.

(17) The Executive Dean will invite the student to provide, not normally within fewer than 10 working days, any reasons why the student believes they are, in fact, suitable for professional experience. The student may choose to include within their submission (where provided) evidence, where relevant, from a suitably qualified practitioner that the student is medically fit to engage in the professional experience.

(18) Following the student's submission (if provided), the Executive Dean will make a determination about whether the student may be permitted to engage (or re-engage) in the particular professional experience activity. The decision made by the Executive Dean, including reasons for the decision and how to exercise any right of appeal where applicable, will be provided in writing to the student.

(19) The Executive Dean will ensure that appropriate steps are taken to assist and support the student to engage with relevant support services with a view to enabling the student to recover from any temporary setback to their suitability for professional experience.

(20) Where exclusion of a student from a particular WIL activity may disrupt their progression or prevent them from completing their course and/or achieving professional registration, the faculty will engage in discussions with the student about any other options available to them in order that they may continue studies at QUT.

(21) Where concerns arise about a student's suitability for professional experience after the student has already commenced a particular WIL activity, and the concerns are serious enough to warrant removal of the student without notice from the activity, the faculty may immediately remove the student from the activity and follow clauses (13)-(20) above.

Other Professional Experience Activities

(22) Students engaging in other professional experience activities outside of the curriculum (i.e. activities which are not a formal and assessed component of a QUT course) must meet the requirements of the responsible area and the professional experience provider in order to engage in the activity.

(23) If the responsible area has a reasonable concern that the student may be unable to do so, they may prevent or remove the student from undertaking the particular professional experience. An explanation should be provided in writing to the student by the Relevant Responsible Officer which details why the student will not be permitted to undertake the particular professional experience.

Section 7 - Appeal and Review

Professional Experiences within Curriculum

(24) The University Appeals Committee determines appeals by students against a decision made by an Executive Dean that a student is unsuitable for professional experience in relation to a professional experience activity which forms a formal and assessed component of a QUT course ([Work Integrated Learning Policy](#)).

(25) An appeal must be in writing and must be submitted to the Secretary of Appeals Committee within 20 working days of receiving final written notice of the decision of the Executive Dean. The decision of Appeals Committee is final.

Other Professional Experience Activities

(26) The Executive Dean reviews appeals by students against a decision not to approve participation in other professional experience activities outside of the curriculum (i.e. activities which are not a formal and assessed component of a QUT course). The Executive Dean's decision in these cases is final.

Section 8 - Recordkeeping and Reporting

(27) Records must be managed according to QUT's [Records Governance Policy](#).

Section 9 - Definitions

Term	Definition
Faculty Executive Dean/Relevant Responsible Officer	Means the member of staff, within the organisational area at QUT through which the professional experience activity was organised, who has the authority to make a determination about a student's suitability for professional experience and whether or not the student may engage in a professional experience activity.
Suitability for Professional Experience	Means a student's capacity to successfully engage in professional experience activities through meeting the conduct, health, safety, performance, compliance (and any other) requirements of QUT and a professional experience provider whilst undertaking a professional experience activity.
Professional Experience Activity	Is a Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activity which forms a formal and assessed component of a QUT course (Work Integrated Learning Policy), or an activity outside of the curriculum which a student undertakes in order to obtain experience of engaging with a particular profession. These activities may be known as practicums, work placements, industry experience, internships, work experience, etc. A professional experience activity may also be an activity where students gain first-hand knowledge outside of the regular classroom environment, in activities which closely mirror activities undertaken by particular professionals in day-to-day practice of their profession and form a formal component of a QUT course, for example field trips and study tours.

Term	Definition
Professional Experience Provider	Is the provider of the professional experience activity, based in Australia or overseas, which may include, for example, local schools, QUT itself or other education providers, hospitals or medical service providers, public or private businesses, government departments, non-profit providers, etc.
Reasonable Adjustments	Refers to any adjustments for a person with a disability so that they can access and participate in education and employment on the same basis as a person without a disability in comparable circumstances (Disability Policy).
Responsible Area	Is the organisational unit at QUT responsible for organising the professional experience activity with the professional experience provider.
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)	Is a learning approach that enables students to learn through engagement with industry and community partners in authentic activities that are planned for and assessed as part of their course of study (Work Integrated Learning Policy).

Section 10 - Delegations

(28) Refer to [Register of Authorities and Delegations](#) (C167) (QUT staff access only).

Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Derek Cordwell Director, Administrative Division
Author	Michelle Corcoran Project Manager
Enquiries Contact	Derek Cordwell Director, Administrative Division