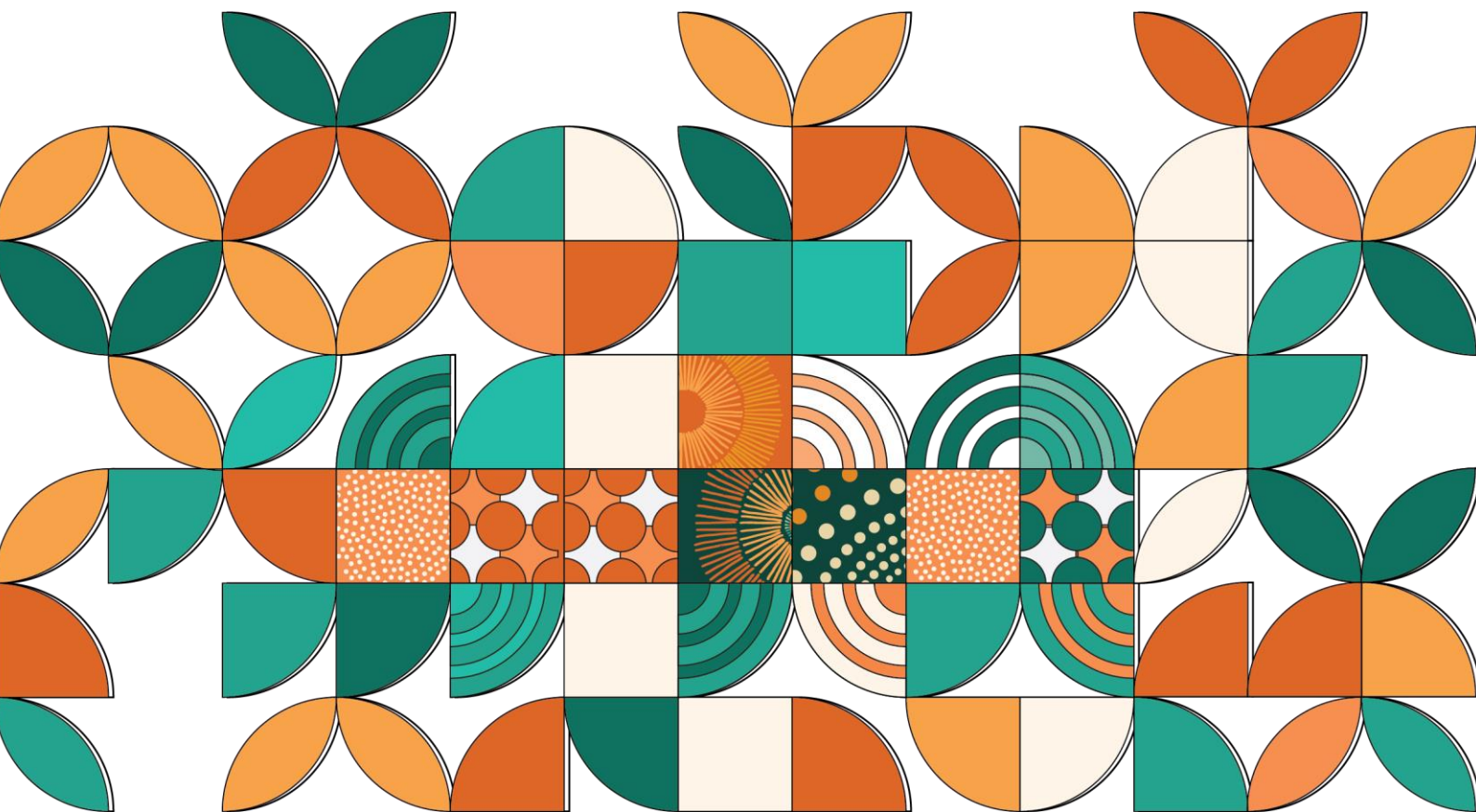


Professional Experience Placement Policy



SECTION 1

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines the principles and requirements for the management of Professional Experience Placements (PEP) at the Institute of Health and Nursing Australia (IHNA).
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Professional training experiences are high-quality, safe, and educationally sound, enabling students to attain the relevant competencies in their course.
- 1.3 The policy also clarifies the responsibilities of students, IHNA staff, and placement providers in facilitating successful placements.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all IHNA courses that include a professional experience placement component across all IHNA campuses and modes of delivery, excluding the HLT54121 Diploma of Nursing (which is governed by a separate placement policy).
- 2.2 The scope of this policy is to provide guidelines to assist IHNA in meeting the current requirements specific to PEP of students and staff participating in PEP.
- 2.3 This policy applies across all IHNA campuses and students, irrespective of the mode of delivery and course delivery sites.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Refer to IHNA's Glossary of Terms.

SECTION 2

Policy

4. Fitness for Practice and Professional Conduct

- 4.1 Students are responsible and accountable for ensuring they are safe and have the capability to practice:
 - a. Students must be fit to practice, attend and participate in the professional experience.
 - b. Students must disclose to the Course Coordinator/National Placement Coordinator any physical or mental health issues that have the potential to impact their ability to complete the professional experience.
 - c. Any student concerned about meeting fitness to practice requirements must discuss this with the Course Coordinator for potential support services.
 - d. Students must uphold high standards of professional and ethical conduct throughout their placement. This includes adhering to IHNA's Student Code of Conduct and any relevant industry codes or standards of practice.

- e. Students are expected to behave in a manner that ensures the safety, dignity, and rights of clients/patients and colleagues.
- f. IHNA and students share a responsibility to comply with all legal, ethical, and regulatory requirements relevant to the placement setting, to ensure safety and legislative compliance at all times (e.g. privacy laws, confidentiality, infection control standards, etc.). Any student unsure of their professional obligations should consult with IHNA staff for guidance.

Note: In courses leading to regulated professions, additional requirements (such as specific codes or guidelines of professional boards) may apply regarding fitness to practice and conduct; IHNA will inform students of any such obligations as relevant.

5. Supporting Students during PEP

- 5.1 IHNA is committed to providing robust support to students throughout their placements, recognizing that engaged support helps students succeed and maintain well-being.
- 5.2 Support is available from academic and placement staff as needed, including but not limited to the Course Coordinator, Placement Coordinators, and the Placement Education team.
- 5.3 Students will be informed of how and when they can contact IHNA staff for assistance during their placement (for example, contacting a Placement Coordinator if issues arise).
- 5.4 IHNA identifies the well-being needs of its student cohort and puts in place appropriate support services to address those needs.
- 5.5 Students are advised of available well-being support options (such as counselling services or academic support) and how to access them should personal or health issues emerge during placement.

6. Supervision

- 6.1 All students on placement will be appropriately supervised by qualified professionals at the Provider Placement facilities.
- 6.2 IHNA will ensure that placement providers assign a supervisor or mentor who has the necessary qualifications and experience in the field to guide the student.
- 6.3 Depending on the context, a student may work with one or more placement supervisors. These supervisors are responsible for providing day-to-day guidance, overseeing the student's tasks (especially any that could pose risk if unsupervised), and contributing feedback on the student's performance.
- 6.4 IHNA staff (such as Training Managers/Course Coordinators/Educators and Placement Coordinators) may also visit or liaise with the placement site to monitor student progress and address any concerns.

7. Assessment and Feedback

- 7.1 IHNA ensures that assessments of student performance during PEP are conducted by persons with appropriate assessor competencies.
- 7.2 All assessment requirements of the placement (for example, competency checklists or logbooks) must be completed and signed off by the designated placement supervisor or IHNA trainer/assessor, as applicable.
- 7.3 The IHNA Course Coordinator is responsible for reviewing the student's performance evaluation from the placement and determining if the student has met the learning outcomes of the PEP.
- 7.4 Students will receive feedback on their performance and are encouraged to reflect on their placement experience to identify areas of strength and areas for further development.

8. Placement Facilities and Resources

- 8.1 IHNA will approve and arrange placements only with Providers that can provide a safe and suitable learning environment for students.
- 8.2 The IHNA identifies the facilities, resources, and equipment required for each training program and works with third-party placement providers to ensure those needs are met. This means that the Placement facilities must have the necessary equipment and opportunities for students to practice and attain the competencies relevant to their course.
- 8.3 IHNA, in collaboration with placement providers, ensures that all facilities and equipment used by students are fit for purpose, safe, and maintained properly and that students have access to the tools and resources they require to participate fully in training activities.
- 8.4 Prior to student allocation, IHNA conducts checks or formal agreements with placement providers to confirm that the site meets required standards (including health and safety standards, availability of appropriate learning experiences, and compliance with any industry-specific regulations).
- 8.5 IHNA has documented procedures and strategies to identify and manage any risks associated with students using the placement site's facilities, resources, or equipment.
- 8.6 If any issues are identified (for example, a piece of equipment not functioning safely), IHNA and the provider will address them before the student's placement or make alternative arrangements. This collaborative approach ensures that placement learning environments are conducive to quality training and assessment and remain safe for student participation throughout the placement period.

9. Placement Requirements and Conditions

- 9.1 Students must fulfil all IHNA and site-specific pre-placement requirements within the stipulated timeframes before they can commence their placement. No extensions will be granted for these requirements except under extraordinary circumstances, as failure to complete them on time can jeopardise the placement

arrangement.

- 9.2 IHNA will provide students with a clear list of all pre-placement requirements at the outset of their course or well in advance of the placement in accordance with the PEP Procedure. It is the student's responsibility to meet these requirements.
- 9.3 Students are advised to plan ahead and allow adequate time to complete checks or vaccinations that might be time-consuming.
- 9.4 Failure to comply with the pre-placement mandatory conditions by the specified due dates may result in the scheduled placement being cancelled or deferred (at the student's cost).
- 9.5 Many placement sites impose mandatory prerequisites that students must fulfil before they can start. Non-compliance with any such pre-placement mandatory condition by the required deadline will likely result in the student being unable to commence the placement.
- 9.6 The scheduled placement may be cancelled if conditions are not met. Furthermore, even if a placement has begun, a site may ask at any time for proof of compliance (for instance, an immunisation card or police check).
- 9.7 If the student cannot furnish proof when asked, they may be directed to cease the placement until they do so. Students should, therefore, carry or have accessible proof of their compliance with all prerequisites when attending placement.
- 9.8 IHNA provides a Professional Placement Orientation Guide for students (and placement educators/supervisors), which offers detailed guidance on what to expect during placement and how to handle various situations.
- 9.9 Students must review this guide prior to starting their placement. The guide covers processes for dealing with unforeseen events such as personal injury, sudden illness (e.g. if a student becomes sick during a shift), incidents like needle-stick injuries, or personal circumstances like pregnancy and how to notify if any limitations are needed during placement. It also outlines the procedure for managing incidents of unacceptable behaviour or any other critical events while on placement.

Note: that students can be asked by placement sites to show evidence of having met these conditions on the first day of placement; if a student cannot provide such evidence when requested, the placement provider or IHNA may withdraw the student from the placement until compliance is achieved

10.Placement Allocation

- 10.1 IHNA is responsible for the allocation of students to placement opportunities in a manner that is fair, transparent, and aligned with educational objectives. The process for placement allocation is as follows:

- a. Students are provided with information about available placement sites and opportunities through the Student Placement System or other official IHNA communication channels.
- b. The suitability of each placement, in terms of meeting the objectives of the placement course, is decided by the national placement Coordinator/Placement Coordinator and Course Coordinator.
- c. Allocation of students to placement sites is conducted by the Placement Team in collaboration with academic staff.

10.2 Special Consideration for Placement allocation will be given only in the following circumstances:

- a. Students with a disability access plan;
- b. Students who are the registered carer for a sick or disabled dependent child or relative (relevant documented evidence must be provided);
- c. Students with a major health problem requiring frequent and specialised treatment which is only available at certain locations (relevant documented evidence must be provided);
- d. Urgent and exceptional reasons for requesting a variation to placement allocation include extenuating medical, compassionate or special circumstances which are outside the control of the student and where there was no opportunity for advanced preparation or notification.

10.3 Students eligible for Special Consideration in Placement allocation must submit their request to the Course Coordinator at least 12 weeks before placement unless otherwise notified. Requests provided later than this will be accepted for consideration, but a late application may jeopardise IHNA's capacity to allocate a suitable placement.

10.4 Students are required to accept and abide by the placement allocation decision.

10.5 Circumstances that are a normal part of life will not be considered when making allocation decisions. Such circumstances include:

- a. Student work or other business commitments;
- b. Being a parent or during pregnancy;
- c. Weddings and other celebratory events;
- d. Extra-curricular activities such as clubs;
- e. Requests to be re-allocated to placement sites previously allocated but not attended or where the student withdrew from the placement;
- f. Travel, transportation and accommodation requirements. Previous untoward experience from the clinical facilities;
- g. Insufficient leave at work or business.

10.6 IHNA's Placement Team will evaluate all special consideration requests and make final determinations on

placement allocations.

- 10.7 The Placement Team (or relevant committee) reviews all placement allocations, including any adjustments for special considerations, to ensure they meet course requirements and equitable standards.
- 10.8 Once approved, students are notified of their final placement details prior to the commencement of the placement.
- 10.9 Students who are not eligible for Special Consideration (but who cannot attend placement because of other commitments) are required to withdraw from the placement course as soon as possible after the placement allocation is notified and contact their Course Coordinator to discuss a change to their Training Plan.
- 10.10 Students who do not formally withdraw or notify their Course Coordinator but who then do not attend an allocated placement will not be permitted to submit preferences for any future placement in subsequent enrolment in that course and will be allocated to a placement only after all other student allocations have been made.

11. Placement Attendance and Conduct Requirements

- 11.1 Students are required to attend the placement on all scheduled days and hours, as per the roster or timetable provided.
- 11.2 Unless otherwise specified, students are responsible for arranging and funding their own travel and accommodation for the placement.
- 11.3 IHNA is not liable for any injury, loss, or damage that a student may incur as a result of their travel or accommodation arrangements for placement, except where required by law (Students are covered by IHNA's insurance for incidents that occur during the placement activities at the host site, but personal arrangements outside of placement fall under the student's responsibility).
- 11.4 Unless otherwise specified, students will not be paid for the hours worked on a placement, as PEP is a required component of their course (an authorised vocational placement under the Fair Work Act's vocational placement provisions).
- 11.5 Students must follow all rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of the placement provider facilities.
- 11.6 In addition to the site's rules, students must uphold IHNA's Student Code of Conduct while on placement.
- 11.7 Students should communicate in a respectful and professional manner about all placement-related matters.
- 11.8 Any form of misconduct, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour during placement is subject to disciplinary action under IHNA's policies and procedures.

12. Withdrawing from a PEP

- 12.1 The right to withdraw from a course (i.e. 'drop' a course) before the census date, without penalty or fee, exists

for placement courses as it does for other courses.

- 12.2 Students wishing to withdraw from a placement should consider the implications of doing so, for example, the effect on the duration of their study to complete the course and the potential requirement of gap training for any superseded units.
- 12.3 Students deciding to withdraw must formally do so as per IHNA's Policy and Procedure so that their placement allocation can be made available to another student. Students deciding to withdraw are required to do so as early as possible before the course, and placement is due to begin, preferably within five (5) working days following placement site allocation but no later than weeks before placement commences.
- 12.4 Irrespective of the right to withdraw from the course, students who withdraw more than once from the same placement course, other than for demonstrated (documented) special consideration circumstances, will be allocated after all other student placement allocations.

13. Removal and/or Termination of PEP

- 13.1 A student may, on the recommendation of the facility delegate or the IHNA delegate, be removed from the PEP:
- a. The Course Coordinator will investigate the circumstances for the removal and report the details of the removal to the National Training Manager and the National Placement Coordinator.
 - b. The Course Coordinator or delegate will meet with the student to further explore the context for removal.
 - c. In the event that the removal of the student from the PEP is unjustified, the student will be returned to placement.
- 13.2 If removal from the PEP is due to either; a facilities people safety concern, a critical clinical incident, that the student performing tasks that are outside the scope of the qualifications, or there is a misconduct/unprofessional conduct concern, the Course Coordinator or delegate will:
- a. Inform the student of the reasons for their removal in writing; and
 - b. Advise the student that they have the right to appeal the decision for their removal.
- 13.3 A student who has been removed from the PEP may appeal against the decision to the Course Coordinator, (as per the Student Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure). The appeal must be received within 48 hours from the time of removal from the PEP. The appeal must be in writing and address the grounds for the students' removal.
- 13.4 The Course Coordinator will consider the appeal and, in consultation with the National Training Manager, may take appropriate decisions such as:
- a. Reinstate the student back into the PEP after providing adequate support.
 - b. Terminate the PEP and refer the student to the National Training Manager for possible disciplinary

action.

- 13.5 A student may appeal the decision of the Course Coordinator to refuse to allow them to continue in the PEP. The appeal must be in writing, must include reasons and any evidence to support the submission and must be submitted to the National Training Manager.
- 13.6 If a student's PEP is terminated due to matters relating to the healthcare facility (unrelated to the student's performance), the National Placement Coordinator will liaise with the Course Coordinator and attempt to provide an alternative PEP for the student.
- 13.7 In the event an alternate healthcare facility is not available, arrangements will be made for the student to complete their PEP at another time.

14. Leave During PEP

- 14.1 Unforeseen leave, such as bereavement or serious illness of a family member or personal trauma, will be considered on a case-by-case basis and can be discussed in confidence with the Course Coordinator and/or National Placement Coordinator.
- 14.2 Students who are not able to attend the PEP, because they are ill or have personal extenuating circumstances must notify the healthcare facility and the Clinical Educator, prior to the commencement of the shift:
- The Clinical Educator will notify the staff of the Clinical Placement Team when a student is absent.
 - The Clinical Educator will communicate the student's return to the PEP to the Clinical Placement Team.
- 14.3 All absences from the PEP are recorded and students will be required to make up outstanding hours. Students will be required to formally request for an exemption request for accepted Professional Experience Placement in accordance with section 11 of this policy.
- 14.4 Students will be charged an incidental fee for every week of 'make up' time.
- 14.5 Students are liable to pay for extra make up days beyond the booked days which they have taken for sick days or personal reasons.
- 14.6 IHNA will not be responsible for covering the expenses incurred because of incidents, such as the activation of a fire alarm due to negligence.
- 14.7 Make-up time is limited and cannot always be guaranteed, which may delay a student's progression in the course.
- 14.8 Students who are absent for two or more consecutive days must provide a medical certificate to the Clinical Educator/Delegate. The certificate will be uploaded into the Knowledge Hub (KH), student management system used by IHNA.
- 14.9 Students who fail to meet the above requirements in the appropriate manner will be placed on a learning contract for failing to fulfil their requirements for professional conduct whilst undertaking PEP. If a student

does not complete the required 'make up' hours, they will:

- a. Be deemed Not Satisfactory in the PEP;
- b. Have to repeat the PEP;
- c. Be ineligible to progress to the following semester.

15. Submitting Exemption Request for accepted Professional Experience Placement

15.1 IHNA acknowledges that students may face compassionate or compelling circumstances preventing them from attending their allocated Professional Experience Placement (PEP). In such cases, students must follow the exemption application process outlined in the Practical Experience Placement Procedure.

15.2 Students must submit a formal exemption request with valid supporting evidence at least ten (10) weeks before the placement commencement date.

15.3 Requests will be assessed by the Clinical Placement Coordinator, and exemptions will only be granted if they meet IHNA's policy criteria.

1.1 If an exemption is approved, IHNA and the student will share the cost of arranging an alternative placement (50% each).

15.4 If an exemption is rejected, or if a student fails to attend an accepted placement without approval, the student will bear 100% of the cost for securing a new placement.

15.5 IHNA cannot guarantee an alternative placement at the same facility. Students must be prepared to accept an alternative venue or wait for the next available placement.

15.6 For full details on the exemption request process, refer to Clause 4 of the Practical Experience Placement Procedure.

16. Risks During Placement

16.1 IHNA has a rigorous risk management plan in place to handle risks (including unforeseen events), which are covered in detail in the professional experience placement procedure.

16.2 Below are a few examples of risks that may be encountered during professional experience placement:

- a. Absence from placement without adequate prior notice;
- b. Unacceptable student behaviour and misconduct, including sexual misconduct;
- c. Impairment;
- d. Intoxication while practising;
- e. Not following accepted professional standards;
- f. Lack of preparedness for the PEP;
- g. Unsatisfactory progress during PEP;

- h. Uninformed pregnancy;
- i. Critical Incidents during Clinical Placement (Accidents/Incidents/Injuries such as needle stick injuries).
- j. Any breaches of code of conduct and privacy issues in the Provider facilities and/or IHNA premises.

17. Feedback, Complaints and Continuous Improvement

- 17.1 IHNA strongly encourages a culture of feedback and open communication regarding professional experience placements. Feedback from students, placement supervisors, and other stakeholders is invaluable in improving the quality of training and support services.
- 17.2 After completing a placement (and even during, for longer placements), students will have the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience. This may be through surveys, evaluation forms, reflection assignments, or debrief sessions with IHNA staff.
- 17.3 IHNA is committed to constructively using feedback and any complaints to inform its continuous improvement processes.
- 17.4 If Students have a concern or complaint about their placement, they should raise it as soon as possible in accordance with IHNA's Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.
- 17.5 IHNA records and stored all feedback, complaints, and appeals related to placements.

18. Responsibility

- 18.1 The National Training Manager and the Head of Placement/National Placement Coordinator have the overall responsibility for this policy. Course Coordinators/Academic Staff are responsible for integrating the placement component into the curriculum and supporting students academically before, during, and after placement. Other responsibilities are outlined within the document.

SECTION 3

19. Associated Information

Related Internal Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Experience Placement Procedure • Professional Experience Placement Procedure for Diploma of Nursing • Student Professional Experience Placement Agreement • Student Complaints and Appeal Policy • Student Complaints and Appeal Procedure • Students Code of Conduct Policy • Students Code of Conduct Procedure • Social Media Policy • Social Media Procedure
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Experience Placement tool PEP Orientation Guide for Students and Clinical Educators
Related Legislation, Standards, and Codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 2025 Standards for RTOs Outcome Standards for RTOs Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards 2017 Enrolled Nurse Standards for Practice 2016 Relevant State and Commonwealth contracts and eligibility documents (VET Student Loans, Skills First Program, Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD), Smart and Skilled) Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) Relevant State and Commonwealth Work Health and Safety (WHS) Laws and Regulations
Date Approved	23/11/2023
Date Endorsed	14/12/2023
Date of Effect	23/11/2023
Date of Review	31/12/2026
Approval Authority	Executive Management Committee (endorsed by Academic Board)
Document Custodian	Head of Placement/National Training Manager
IHNA DocID	IHNA-PEPP1-3.1
Department	Placement
2025 Standards for RTOs	Outcome Standards for RTOs

20. Change History

Version Control		Version 3.1
Version No.	Date	Brief description of the change, incl. version number, changes, who considered, approved, etc.
V.2.0	13/03/2021	Separated policy document from procedure, revised and updated with pertinent sections
V.2.1	28/10/2021	Minor changes incorporating critical incident management

V.3.0	23/07/2023	Updated in the new template and logo, moved definitions into the Glossary of Terms
V.3.1	08/05/2025	Changed Standards for RTOs 2015 to 2025 Standards for RTOs, Outcome Standards for RTOs, Added Quality Area