School of Education

Procedures for Reporting Degrees of Concern in Professional Experience Placements

Faculty: Law, Education, Business and Arts

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# Procedures for Reporting Degrees of Concern in Professional Experience Placements

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## Notification Of Concern

It is in the best interests of the PST, the mentoring teacher and the school students that any concerns regarding the PST’s conduct or competency be addressed as soon as possible.

Should the Mentor Teacher have concerns about a PST’s progress at any stage in the placement, the principal, the PST and the InSchool Office should be notified. A “Notification of Concern” form (Appendix 1) should be completed and emailed to inschool@cdu.edu.au as a matter of priority.

## Level 1: Concern

Examples of this level of concern may include (but are not limited to):

- Issues with punctuality
- Absences
- Standard of dress
- Family members in the school
- Lack of initiative
- Failure to complete placement administrative guidelines (such as working with children checks, failure to nominate, clear understating of requirements).

The InSchool Office should be notified as soon as the concern is identified.

Mentor teachers should complete the Notification of Concern form and email to the InSchool Office.

Typically this level of concern is typically rectified once it has been formally identified.
On being resolved an email should be forwarded to the PST, the school and the InSchool Office to advise of the improved situation.

Level 2: Targeted Support

Where the mentor teacher considers that the PST may fail to achieve the requirements of the placement, the Targeted Support Plan (See appendix 4) must to be completed immediately as the concerns are identified.

The Targeted Support Plan (usually a 5-day plan) should be completed following a discussion with the PST and a university support staff. It must then be signed by all, and forwarded to the university (InSchool Office).

This form will identify the areas of concern and establish a program of objectives, activities and criteria for the remainder of the placement.

The PST will be notified in writing by the InSchool Office that satisfactory completion of the Placement Targeted Support Plan will be required for successful completion of the placement. Once this has been successfully completed the PST, the CDU InSchool office should be notified by email.

In the event that the PST is unable to meet the identified developmental goals within the 5 days, a second and final opportunity may be provided.

Students who do not successfully complete the Targeted Support Plan over the 2 targeted support periods will be deemed to be unsuccessful in this unit and a Fail grade will be recorded.

Level 2 - Targeted Support: Examples

Examples of concerns which might be considered by the mentor teacher as being necessary to develop a Targeted Support Plan include (but are not limited to):

The inability to:

- Plan lessons
- Teach effectively
- Accept feedback
- Manage classroom behaviour
- Complete full days and weeks where required

Unable to:

- Meet identified graduate standards
- Demonstrate proficiency of content knowledge
- Speak professionally (grammatically)
- Differentiate for student learning
- Rectify continued absences or lateness
- Ensure inclusive and discriminatory practices.

Level 2 - Targeted Support: Guidelines for Mentor Teachers

Mentor teachers should follow these guidelines to support a PST who is identified as potentially failing to meet the all necessary professional experience requirements.

1. Advise the University:

Complete the midpoint ASSESSMENT FORM A. This will show that the PST is experiencing difficulties in relation to the expectations of the placement.

University staff will assist with the process of supporting a PST and provide information to the PST and school based staff related to the implications for the PST.

2. Complete Documentation:

Complete the Targeted Support Plan, in consultation with the University Director/Coordinator, the PST and school based Professional Experience Coordinator, Principal or Director. Maintain detailed notes of meetings, all of which should be dated and signed by participants.

3. Email Documentation to University:

Email the completed Targeted Support Plan to the InSchool Professional Experience Office inschool@cdu.edu.au

The PST will receive a formal letter from the InSchool Office indicating that his/her professional experience is potentially marginalised with possible risk of failure.

The PST will be informed that failure will require consultation with the course coordinator around progression implications.

4. Support Pre-service Teacher:

Continue to support the PST to achieve the desired outcomes of the placement. The Professional Experience office will maintain contact in relation to the PST’s progress.

5. Keep University staff informed of the PST’s progress as the placement continues. The situation will be reviewed as the program continues.

Extreme difficulty

If the PST is experiencing extreme difficulties that warrant further action prior to the conclusion of the placement, the parties involved may agree to:

- Relocate the student to another class, setting or school; or
- Terminate the professional experience placement.

Note: in the situation above, the placement days undertaken are not automatically credited and in most instances, will have to be recompleted in the new class setting.
Termination of Professional Experience

The Director for Professional Experience has the discretion to withdraw a student from a placement in the event of unprofessional behaviour. Unprofessional behaviour includes misconduct, unethical or unsafe behaviour and/or any breach of code of conduct or breach of client confidentiality.

Withdrawal from a Professional Experience is a last-resort process and should only occur after consultation with the preservice teacher, mentor teacher and the school coordinator. This usually does not occur without warning or before remedial actions have been implemented.

Withdrawal of Professional Experience also occurs when a school notifies CDU that it cannot adequately manage the placement. If the situation is viewed as urgent, host schools and educational sites reserve the right to terminate placements immediately. This includes if a student presents to a placement under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

In such situations the number of placement days are not usually counted towards successful completion of practicum requirements.

If a Professional Experience is terminated, the student should contact CDU within 24 hours if possible. The student also needs to notify the Placement Office as soon as possible.

Voluntary withdrawal

A student who voluntarily withdraws from a placement at any stage before the completion of the placement, without the knowledge and/or agreement of both the university and the site, will be deemed to have failed the placement.

This applies especially to students who have been given a “second chance” through the implementation of a Targeted Support Plan, to remediate issues in their professional practice before the completion of the final Professional Experience report.

Consequences Of Failure In/On Professional Experience

Failure: A failure in the professional experience component will mean that a student has not met an essential element of the Academic Progress for the course.

PSTs’ attention is drawn to the Charles Darwin University’s Exclusion Regulations. PSTs should note that a failure in any of their professional experience placements may lead to exclusion from the course. Continuation after exclusion is not automatic.

Where a student fails a placement for the first time, they will normally be allowed to reenrol in the subject unless there is a well-documented case of unprofessional conduct, a breach of the duty of care to school students/clients, or if the reputation of the university has been put at serious risk.

Where a student is permitted to reenrol, they may be permitted to repeat the professional experience component only, provided that all mandatory preliminary requirements (e.g., attendance at lectures, completion of academic tasks) have been completed satisfactorily. This option is valid for 2 enrolment periods.

Students will generally be permitted to attempt a particular placement twice only.
Where a student is undertaking a professional experience subject for the second time, following a failure in the first attempt, and subsequently fails the placement on the second attempt, the student may be considered for exclusion from the course in accordance with Academic Progress regulations.

**Level 3: Misconduct**

Where a PST demonstrates misconduct in the school/setting the mentor teacher should advise the CDU Professional Experience Office immediately. Misconduct can be demonstrated in various ways. As part of the duty of care of teaching professionals, PSTs, practising teachers and CDU staff are bound to report any unprofessional behaviour.

Where a PST has been identified as breaching the Code of Conduct or demonstrating non-professional behaviour, the school/principal should notify CDU immediately. If the instance/s of behaviour is deemed to be completely unsatisfactory at the school, the principal may advise that the school no longer wishes to host the PST. A letter to advise of this action should be forwarded to the InSchool office (see Appendix 5). On receipt of such information CDU will investigate the suitability of the PST to enter the teaching profession in accordance with the Misconduct Policy procedures (see Appendix 6).

**Level 3: Misconduct – Examples**

- Inappropriate language
- Breach of Duty of Care
- Defiance
- Inappropriate behaviour towards students, parent, staff and community
- Racist or non-inclusive behaviours
- Maligning the reputation of CDU/school

*Refer to Student Central Misconduct Procedures*

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Charles Darwin University (Student General Misconduct) By-Laws](#)
Letter to PST - “Notification of Concern”

Dear

Re: Notification of Concern

I am writing to formally advise that your Professional Experience placement for unit has been placed on a status of “Notification of Concern”. Staff in the CDU School of Education and your host school/centre have determined that there are elements of your Professional Experience which are currently not at a level to meet the unit requirements.

It is important that you familiarise yourself with the procedures for a Notification of Concern. These are available on the InSchool website: http://inschool.cdu.edu.au

A Targeted Support Plan has been or will be developed by your mentor teacher, in conjunction with yourself and possibly CDU and other school staff. This includes explicit actions that you as a PST need to take in order to complete the placement satisfactorily. The plan also includes a time for reviewing the situation and for consultation meetings.

Depending on the outcome of the Targeted Support Plan different processes will be undertaken to support you in your endeavour to meet the requirements for subject completion.

As a matter of urgency, you are required to sign the declaration at the bottom of this letter to indicate that you have read it and then return it immediately by email to the InSchool Office: inschool@cdu.edu.au

If you have any queries about the process, please discuss these with the InSchool Office.

Yours Sincerely,

Director for Professional Experience
School of Education
Charles Darwin University
Appendix Two

Targeted Support Plan

Preservice teacher:

<table>
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<th>School</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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Mentor teacher:

A Targeted Support plan must commence at or before the mid point of the practicum. Key reasons for this plan (these elements are considered developmental goals):

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Developmental strategy: (List strategies to be used to support the student in achieving the developmental goals). A daily report should be completed – see over.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Developmental strategy</th>
<th>Key support person</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
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## Daily progress report

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Student’s name</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assessment day</th>
<th>Progress report</th>
<th>Assessment rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developmental goal 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservice teacher has achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservice teacher has not yet achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developmental goal 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservice teacher has achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservice teacher has not yet achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developmental goal 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservice teacher has achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Preservice teacher has not yet achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developmental goal 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservice teacher has achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<td>Preservice teacher has not yet achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developmental goal 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservice teacher has achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Preservice teacher has not yet achieved sufficient improvement</td>
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Comments (where relevant)

### Recommendations: To be completed at the end of a 5-day “targeted support” period

- Preservice teacher has made sufficient improvement during the targeted support period(s) of 5-10 days to indicate that he/she is on track to successfully fulfil the professional experience requirements.
- Preservice teacher has not yet made sufficient improvement during the first targeted support period and is to undertake a further and final 5 day targeted support period.
- Preservice teacher has not made sufficient improvement during the targeted support period(s) and has failed the teaching experience and the Professional Experience Office will be informed.

Signed Mentor teacher

Signed preservice teacher
### Appendix Three

**School – Early Cessation of Professional Experience Placement**

Host School to return this form to InSchool Office: inschool@cdu.edu.au

**Form to be completed by the School Principal**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Name:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preservice Teacher Name:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of days completed:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Date Placement Ceased:</th>
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The above PST has not met the requirements of the Professional Experience placement at this time. Procedures for reporting degrees of Concern in Professional Experience have been followed.

**Reason for cessation of placement is:**

- ☐ Targeted Support Plan was not successful
- ☐ Misconduct
- ☐ Other

**School Comment:**

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**Principal's signature:**

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**Date:**

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Appendix Four

Level 1: Concern
- Documentation: Notification of Concern
- Resolved

Continued Concern

Level 2: Targeted Support
- Documentation: Targeted Support Plan
- Resolved: Targeted Support Plan Successful Documentation Required
- Targeted Support Plan Unsuccessful Option for Additional 5 Days TSP

Targeted Support Plan Unsuccessful
- Fail Grade will be recorded

Level 3: Misconduct
- Documentation: Misconduct Report
- Advise CDU Placement Office immediately
- Documentation: Letter of Advice
- Send to CDU InSchool Office
- Placement school decides whether to terminate placement