

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For WSU Students undertaking Professional Experience Placements (PE)

TEAC7154 | TEAC7155 | TEAC7106

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BEFORE PLACEMENT

Special Requirements

I am having issues enrolling in my Professional Experience Subject. What is stopping me?

Please check that you have met all the Special Requirements for this subject. The Special Requirements are related to the legislative requirements for educators in NSW and these are external requirements that must be met. For further information please see:

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/schools/soed/special_requirements

When do I need to complete LANTITE?

LANTITE is an enrolment requirement for PE2, PEK-6, PEx4 and PPE4. This requires you to satisfactorily complete both the Literacy and Numeracy components of LANTITE prior to enrolment into your final school based professional experience. This means that you must complete LANTITE a minimum of the Semester before you are planning to register in your final professional experience subject.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Is there any room for credits towards my professional placement based on my experience in classrooms over the past 3 years? I am currently a Student Learning Support Officer at a Primary School.

Students can apply for Credit for Prior Learning for Professional Experience; however, this will not be through the same process as other units. The University is required to follow NESAs policy on the requirements to provide Recognition of Prior Learning. Please refer to the Credit for Prior Learning Protocols document. Please note: Students may only receive a reduction in days required for their placement rather than the credits for the unit. Please note: Credit can only be given for employment as a Conditionally Accredited Teacher, not for employment as an SLSO or other school position.

If I have a teaching role at a school/community languages school as a conditionally accredited teacher, can I apply for CPL?

Based on the current NESAs policy, you may be eligible to be granted recognition of prior learning for up to 15 days of Professional Experience 1. This placement will be reduced in days in the area that you have previously taught in your role. If you are interested in applying for CPL please email EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au and ask for a copy of the Credit for Prior Learning Policy.

Preparation

Do I need to be fully vaccinated against COVID in order to undertake my placement?

Yes, you do. Alternatively, if you hold a medical contraindication certificate that expires after the last day of the placement, that may also be considered. For more details please read the full [NSW Health orders for Education and Care](#). If you have a medical contraindication certificate please contact the PE Team at EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au immediately.

What do I need to do before I start my placement?

Refer to PE Handbook – Section 1 Roles and Responsibilities

Do I need a name badge?

Yes. Pre-Service Teachers must order their own badge at least 4 weeks before the start of their placement. Please refer to instructions on how to order your Name Badge in vUWS. A small payment for each badge is required when placing an order.

Can I use my own name badge?

No, please see above for ordering details.

What is a conflict of interest?

For the purpose of PE, we classify the following to be a Conflict of Interest:

- You are currently employed at a school (unless pre-approved by the Director of Professional Experience)
- You have relatives enrolled as students at a school
- You have relatives or close friends employed (siblings, parents, etc) at a school
- You have other close relationships with a school (e.g. chaplaincy, sport coach).

You are not to attend a school where your children are currently attending as students. *Your relationship with this school is as a parent. It could be very difficult to maintain the same relationship if this school fails you on PE. It also puts teachers in a difficult circumstance if there are issues with your performance. Whilst on PE you also come into contact with private and confidential information about children and families and it is not always appropriate for you to know this as a fellow parent.*

You can not attend a school for professional experience where you have a conflict of interest.

What do I do if I have identified a conflict of interest?

If there is a school that you have identified will pose a conflict of interest for you, please register this in [InPlace](#) in the conflict of interest section of your profile.

If you have been allocated to a school/centre and you believe this poses a conflict of interest, please notify the PE team urgently: EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

Placement Allocation and Location

What is InPlace? It has been referred to a couple of times, but I don't know what this is.

InPlace is our student placement system. It stores the data base of schools as well as students requiring a placement each semester. InPlace uses your details to allocate you to a professional experience school. Please see: https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/placements_hub/placements_hub/inplace

What do I do if I have identified a conflict of interest and I am already allocated in InPlace?

Register your conflict of interest details in [InPlace](#) – there is a conflict of interest section. If you have already been allocated to the school/centre, please notify the PE team urgently:
EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

Can I do placement at the school where I am working as an SLSO?

No. When you are employed as an SLSO, you have a very different role to that of a teacher. It is often difficult for you and the school to see you in the role of a teacher, and this causes issues for pre-service teachers.

Can I do placement at a school where I have a teaching contract?

Yes, if you meet certain criteria, are conditionally accredited as an Initial teacher and your placement has been approved by the Director of PE. It must not be in a school where you completed your PE1.

We need to report to NESAs any student completing placement in their workplace and provide a guarantee that there are still checks in place to ensure a quality placement.

If you would like to be considered to complete your final placement at your place of work, email EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au to be provided with details of how to apply.

I know someone who works at the local primary/secondary school. Can I ask them to give me a placement?

No. Students must not organise their own placements. You may email the PE team: EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au with the details, but there is no guarantee that you will be placed at that School/Centre. There are many factors considered when sourcing placements. Also, there may be a conflict of interest for you. If there is a school that you have identified as a conflict of interest, please register this in [InPlace](#) in the conflict of interest section of your profile.

Can I find my own placement?

No. Students must not organise their own placements, or approach Schools/Centres directly for placement. All Universities have a signed agreement with the NSW Department of Education confirming that the sourcing of placements must be completed through the university and not through individual students.

I prefer not to be allocated to a faith-based school. Can I submit such a preference?

You may update [InPlace](#) with any details of conflicts of interest or specific requests. For sensitive matters, please contact the PE team – EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au.

I don't have a car to get to and from placement. Will I have to travel far by public transport?

You must update [InPlace](#) with your preferred mode of transport to attend placement. Students must expect to travel up to 90 minutes from their place of residence as entered in MySR under term residence. While 90min is the maximum, we do aim to keep students within 60 minutes from their home if driving, 75 minutes on public transport where possible.

How far will I have to travel to my placement?

Students must expect to travel up to 90 minutes from their place of residence as entered in MySR under term residence. Any changes to a student's address in the 8 weeks prior to the scheduled start of placement must be emailed to the PE Team (EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au) as well as being updated by the student in MySR under term residence. While 90min is the maximum, we do aim to keep students within 60 minutes from their home if driving, 75 minutes on public transport where possible.

I moved house and forgot to update my address in MySR. What do I do?

You must update your term residential address in MySR. This information is then automatically fed into [InPlace](#). Any changes to a student's address in the 8 weeks prior to the scheduled start of placement must be emailed to the PE Team (EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au) as well as being updated by the student in MySR under term residence. If not, your placement allocation may be based on your previous address.

I have been allocated a placement and it is more than a 90-minute commute from my home. What do I do?

Contact the PE Team urgently by emailing EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

I have a medical condition and would like to apply to be considered for alternate arrangements for my placement. How do I do this?

You must be approved for a Placement Integration Plan (PIP) for any alternate arrangements to be recognised on placement. Your PIP needs to be finalised at least 6 weeks prior to the placement start date. This link will take you to the [Disabilities Team webpage](#) for further information.

I have a special event/holiday occurring during the placement period. Can I take leave and/or change my placement dates?

This is not normally considered. Students need to be available during the placement date range to attend placement. Students are informed of these dates at the start of semester. However, if the plans are outside your control, email the placement Subject Coordinator with the details for consideration, but there is no guarantee a request will be approved.

What do I do if I withdraw from placement before the start date?

Email the PE team at EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au, as well as the Subject Coordinator and PE Academic Program Advisor immediately. We do not get notification through the student management system of your withdrawal and we need to either remove you from our placement list or notify a school of your withdrawal.

Do I need to contact my allocated school/centre before the start of placement?

Yes. Refer to PE handbook and PE Checklist on vUWS.

What do I do if I get a Jury Summons before I start my placement?

As soon as you receive your Summons, please send a copy to the PE Team (EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au). We can provide a letter for you to send with your application for exemption.

When will I receive my placement allocation?

Your placement allocation will be available from InPlace 2 to 3 weeks prior to the placement start date.

When will I be given access to the PE Handbook?

The PE Handbook will be made available to you on the vUWS site for your PE subject at the beginning of the semester.

Will I have to attend any lectures or tutorials for my PE subjects prior to attending placement?

Yes. Both the PE1 (TEACH 7154) and PE2 (TEAC 7155) units have four compulsory face to face tutorials. They also have compulsory module/lectures which must be completed to pass the unit.

DURING PLACEMENT

What do I do if I need to be absent from placement for some reason?

Refer to the PE Handbook for instructions. You must notify your Placement Mentor Teacher and University Advisor of your absence and for how long you expect the absence to be.

Am I required to attend university classes for other units whilst on professional experience?

No, your university timetable is structured so that no classes are scheduled during your professional experience placement. Students are expected to attend, be present and focussed during the school day as specified in the PE Handbook. The only exception is if you have an advising meeting with the University Advisor (this maybe face-to-face or through zoom).

What do I do if I need to leave early each day to collect my children from school?

It is your responsibility to organise care for your children while you are on placement. You need to be putting in a full working day, because this is what will be required once you are working in a School. Students have ample notice to organise care before start of placement. If your childcare arrangements have changed suddenly, urgently contact the PE Academic Program Advisor.

What will I need to wear on placement?

You will be required to dress in attire in line with the individual school's policy. Please ensure you talk to your mentor teacher about appropriate attire before you begin the placement. You must also wear your University Pre-Service Teacher Badge during your placement. The NSW Department of Education Dress policy is available through your professional experience vUWS site.

Attendance

Am I required to attend my placement every day?

Yes, pre-service teachers are required to attend the placement every day to meet the requirements for teaching.

What time will I start and finish my placement?

Each school varies in the time of their school day. The School Professional Experience Coordinator will need to inform Pre-service Teachers of the expected arrival and departure time.

It is expected that you will be in attendance at least 30min prior to the start of the school day and 30min after the end of the school day. You must be available for meetings after school.

You are required to complete the attendance register daily, recording both arrival and departure times and have this initialled by your Mentor Teacher.

What do I do if I am sick while I am undertaking my placement?

If you are sick for any days during your placement you must:

1. Contact the school and your University Advisor by 7.30am on the day of absence.
2. Complete an Absence Form and then uploaded onto the vUWS portal.
3. Negotiate with the school or centre to make up the days for your illness

Note: It is not possible to make up missed days when lectures or tutorials are scheduled.

If a pre-service teacher is absent during their placement for 3 or more consecutive days, you will be required to provide a medical certificate.

What if something has come up unexpectedly and I want to take leave during placement. What do I do?

Pre-service teachers are not permitted to negotiate placements days with their Mentor Teachers, nor to absent themselves from their placements for matters such as holidays, weddings, childcare or work. Any special requests must be directed to the Professional Experience Team via Email: EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

Can I delay my placement if I am sick or injured?

Yes, however, there is a process to follow. Please see the Professional Experience handbook for details.

I have injured myself while on placement, what do I need to do?

Pre-service teachers must follow the reporting procedures in their schools. Contact should also be made with the Professional Experience Team. Please refer to the Professional Experience handbook for more information.

Can I attend school excursions while on placement?

Yes, it is expected that you attend excursions, sports carnivals and other such activities with your Mentor Teacher. If you are asked to attend an overnight excursion or camp please see the Professional Experience handbook for this process.

I have a part-time job. Can I do my placement part-time?

No, regardless of your study pattern, professional experience placements are only offered full time. This is because of the preference for schools. It is not possible for them to coordinate multiple pre-service teachers on placement (sometimes from different universities and programs) at the same time unless they attend full time. It is also the preference of schools, for consistency and continuity, which benefits the schools' students and the pre-service teachers.

I cannot afford to take leave from work to do a full-time placement. Can I do a part-time placement?

No, as above. Professional Experience placement is fulltime. If you are under financial stress please contact [student welfare](#).

Support during and while on placement

Who will support me while on placement?

You will have the support of a mentor teacher and the professional experience coordinator at the school, along with your University Advisor.

What can I expect from my Mentor Teacher?

Please refer to Roles & Responsibilities section of the Professional Experience Handbook.

Is there support if I am having difficulty during placement?

Yes. Speak with your Mentor Teacher about your concerns. Try to be specific in identifying what you are concerned about. You need to speak to the Professional Experience Coordinator at your school if you are unsuccessful in your discussions with the Mentor Teacher.

Your University Advisory is always available to discuss concerns that you may have also. It is important that you make contact early rather than leave it until it is too late.

How do I find out who my University Advisor is?

The Professional Experience Team will email you once your University Advisor has been allocated. Their details will then be available in InPlace.

My Mentor Teachers didn't receive any documentation before my placement. Where can they get this from?

Ask your mentor to contact the Professional Experience Team - EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

I have concerns about my preparation from the TPA. Where can I get assistance?

There are resources, exemplars, tutorial notes and hints available on the PE2 vUWS site. Revisit the content in the vUWS site. Your University Advisor will be also be able to answer questions related to the TPA. Note: the TPA is only relevant to PE2 and PEK-6 (i.e. final placement) students.

What happens if I decide to self-withdraw after my placement has started?

You must notify your University Advisor and the Professional Experience Team immediately if for any reason you wish to withdraw from the placement. Please note: Academics can only award a Satisfactory Grade or an Unsatisfactory Grade for Professional Experience Subjects. A withdrawal (W) grade is dependent on your individual application.

How do I get a copy of the final report for my Mentor Teacher to complete?

Report templates are emailed to the School PE Coordinator to distribute direct to the Mentor Teacher.

Your Mentor Teacher can ask the School PE Coordinator, or email EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au to request a copy if they need one.

My Mentor doesn't have a copy of the PE Handbook. How do they get one?

You can email it to them. It is the same as the one you have been provided with.

Or you can ask your Mentor Teacher to request one by emailing the Professional Experience Team: EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

AFTER PLACEMENT

What happens if I fail my placement?

Students will most likely go through the At-Risk Process that is outlined in Section 3 – Progress and assessment, in the Professional Experience Handbook. Please refer to the section regarding the outcome of this process. Students will be able to reattempt the subject in a later semester.

What documents do I have to submit after my placement?

Students are required to submit a final report and their time sheet on vUWS. Please ensure these are signed by you **and** your mentor teacher prior to submission. Along with this some subjects will require additional documents (such as the TPA or reflections) that will be outlined on the relevant section of the subject learning guide.

How do I submit my final report?

There is a page on the vUWS site for submission of documents. Please ensure when submitting all documents that they are in PDF, legible, and signed by both Mentor Teacher and student (photos/images are not accepted).

When will I do my TPA? (Final school based placements only)

The TPA will be completed after the final placement (please note this does not include students exiting with a M.Teach Early Childhood (Birth – 5years). Approaching the end of your placement, you will be contacted with the timeslots that are available and details of how to book your TPA presentation.

What if I can't attend my scheduled TPA appointment?

The TPA is an assessment activity and like all assessments, if you are unable to meet the deadline you must submit an Extension Request through WesternNow. If your presentation time has been booked please ensure you contact the relevant academics to apologise for being unable to attend. You will then need to contact the TPA coordinator to reschedule your TPA.

How do I get a copy of my final report?

Your Mentor Teacher will provide you with a copy that you need to submit to vUWS on the final day of your placement. It is suggested that you sight and sign the report on this day and then scan and submit on vUWS. It is essential that you save a copy of your report. You must submit all of your professional experience reports to NESA/Department of Education for employment purposes.

I need a letter for AITSL

The AITSL letter can be requested by emailing EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au. Please ensure when you are emailing that you provide us with your details (Student ID, Course, Course Completion Date), and the details of the placement units you have completed (Semester completed, Dates, School or Centres). Please note these can take up to 2 weeks for the letter to be finalised and received.