

Guidelines re Extenuating Circumstances for non-attendance at allocated placements

Charles Darwin University is committed to the equitable and timely allocation of student placements. Placements can take place at any time throughout the year and students are expected to attend organised placements. It is acknowledged that extenuating circumstances may occur where the student cannot undertake an arranged placement.

Aim: To develop guidelines policy to ensure that students are aware of the process and policy for consideration of extenuating circumstances when requesting a change to confirmed placement dates.

Present Problem: Cancellation of student placements incurs financial costs to the University and threatens CDU's professional reputation and the goodwill of our external placement providers.

Processes

1. It is expected that students will inform the Placement Office by emailing the relevant placement email account, attention to their Placement Officer of any special circumstance that may prevent them undertaking clinical placement at the beginning of semester. These circumstances may or may not meet the criteria of the Extenuating Circumstances Guidelines. Examples which may not meet extenuating circumstances include childcare, work, holidays, or reliance on public transport.
2. If a student has a placement but later decides they cannot attend due to extenuating circumstances, the student must complete the form at the end of this document and email it to the relevant placement email account, attention to the Placement Team Leader and state their case with a covering letter and supporting evidence. Statutory declarations will not be accepted.
3. The Placement Team Leader will complete a preliminary assessment of the application and provide this along with the student's placement and email history to the Director, Clinical Education (nursing) or the Course Coordinator. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
4. The relevant Placement Officer or the Placement Team Leader will notify the student of the outcome.
5. If the student's application is supported, the placement will be cancelled and another placement will be negotiated for the student after consultation between the Placement Officer and the student. Students may be required to provide further evidence of being fit to return to practice before a new placement is sought.
6. If the application is not supported, the student will be expected to attend the negotiated placement. If the student does not attend, a fail grade for the unit will be awarded.
7. A second application to change a negotiated placement arrangement and which does not meet the Extenuating Circumstances Guidelines will be forwarded to the Theme

Leader/Director of Clinical Education who will review the student's record in relation to the placement to determine the student's progress in the unit of study.

Factors considered as extenuating circumstances

1. **Ill health and unexpected medical conditions:** Students are expected to submit a medical certificate to the Placement Office when applying for extenuating circumstances. This certificate must include the dates the student is deemed as unfit.
2. **Car accident or sudden theft of Motor Vehicle:** Students who unexpectedly lose access to their mode of transportation can supply the police number as proof to apply for extenuating circumstances. The police case number and incident report must be included when applying for extenuating circumstances.
3. **Unforeseen family issues:** Bereavement, serious illness of a family member or personal/family trauma. The matter will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
4. **Military deployment and legal commitments:** Students who are aware of these commitments in advance should reconsider whether they should enrol in a placement unit. If deployment, jury duty or other legal commitments arise unexpectedly the student will need to provide evidence to the Placement Office. The matters will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
5. **National Emergencies:** Students that live in an area facing a state of emergency or emergency situation need to contact the Placement Office as soon as possible to discuss placement options. The matter will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Factors NOT considered as extenuating circumstances

1. **Work Commitments:** When enrolling in a placement unit, students agree to be available for a placement when arranged by the Placement Office. It is expected that if they are given 4 weeks' notice of a pending placement students will be available to attend the placement. Students should inform their employer of impending placement requirements before enrolling to ensure they can be absent from the workplace for the required time to undertake placement.
2. **Recreational holidays:** If students have pre-paid holidays for a particular semester they are advised to wait until the next study period to enrol. Alternatively they should inform the Placement Office by emailing the relevant placement email account, attention to their Placement Officer of their intended plans and provide supporting documentation of the dates the travel was booked. CDU will aim to accommodate these dates if given timely notice but already booked holidays are not considered an extenuating circumstance.
3. **Pre-clinical/pre-placement requirements not current:** It is the student's responsibility to ensure all pre-clinical/pre-placement requirements are up to date. If documents are going to expire 2 weeks prior to or during placement, the placement may be withdrawn and the student may fail the unit.

4. **Childcare:** It is expected that when students enrol in a placement unit they will have arranged child care. If students have concerns regarding childcare they must email the Placement Office at the beginning of the semester before being offered a placement. The Placement Office does not guarantee it will be able to accommodate the student's circumstances.

5. **Distance:** The Placement Office endeavours to source placement within a student's home State or Territory and as close as possible to where the student lives. However, as placements are given at the discretion of facilities/agencies this is not guaranteed. Students may need to travel outside of their local area and possibly outside of their home State or Territory in order to attend placement.

6. **Public Transport:** The Placement Office cannot guarantee requests contingent on public transport. If students are relying on public transport they must inform the Placement Office via email at the beginning of the semester if they are aware of any restrictions that may impact on a placement. Students should be aware that they may need to find accommodation closer to the venue for the duration of placement.

Placement Office email accounts:

Bachelor of Nursing	nurplac@cdu.edu.au
Bachelor of Midwifery	midwifplac@cdu.edu.au
Bachelor of Social Work	sochumplac@cdu.edu.au
Bachelor of Pharmacy	pharmplac@cdu.edu.au
Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science	mlsplac@cdu.edu.au
Graduate Diploma in Child and Family Health	pgnurplac@cdu.edu.au

The Placement Office is located in Blue 5.1.12 and can be visited in person between 8am

Section 1

Student Name: _____

Student ID: _____

Home State: _____

Unit Code: _____

Semester and year of enrolment: _____

Placement Facility: _____

Placement Start Date: _____

Placement End Date: _____

Section 2

I wish to apply to cancel my placement under the 'Guidelines re Extenuating Circumstances for non-attendance to allocated placements' for the following reason (please tick the relevant box):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military deployment or legal commitments
<input type="checkbox"/>	Car accident or sudden theft of motor vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Emergency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unforeseen family circumstances (bereavement, serious illness of a family member or personal/family trauma)		

This is my _____ request to cancel a placement under the 'Guidelines re Extenuating Circumstances for non-attendance to allocated placements'.

I have attached evidence to support my application (please tick the relevant box):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical Certificate (medical certificates must include a start and end date)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of military deployment or legal commitments
<input type="checkbox"/>	Police case number and incident report of accident	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of an unforeseen family circumstances

Section 3

I understand that the following are NOT considered to be Extenuating Circumstances and I am not applying to cancel my placement due to:

- Work Commitments
- Recreational Holidays
- Pre-Clinical/Pre-placement requirements not current
- Childcare
- Distance to travel
- Public transport
- Financial situation

Signature: _____ Date: _____