INTRODUCTION

Charles Darwin University (CDU) is committed to the equitable and 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 a provisional confirmed or confirmed arranged placement.

Aim

To provide a guideline policy to ensure students are aware of the process and policy for consideration of Extenuating Circumstances when requesting a change to confirmed placements.

Present Problem

Cancellation of student placements incurs a high financial cost to the University and threatens CDU’s professional reputation and the goodwill of our external placement providers.

Processes

1. Students are required to inform the Placement Office by emailing the relevant placement email account, outlining any special circumstances that may prevent the student from 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 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 of Nursing or Midwifery to decide if the extenuating circumstances has been approved or declined. Incomplete applications will not be accepted or followed up and therefore may not
supported. The Academic will respond to the student directly the reasoning on why their Extenuating Circumstances has been declined and let the Placement team know.

4. Where the Extenuating Circumstances application has been assessed and reviewed by the Team Leader in the first instance the decision-making process will be resolved by the Team Leader in conjunction with the relevant Placement Officer, on a case by case basis. The student will be advised accordingly.

5. The Placement Team Leader or relevant Placement Officer will notify the student of the outcome.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. A second application to change a negotiated placement arrangement and which does not meet Extenuating Circumstances Guidelines will be forwarded to the 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 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 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 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 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 email 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. **Preclinical requirements not current:** It is the student’s responsibility to ensure all preclinical requirements are up to date. If documents are going to expire 2 weeks prior 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 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 reasonable distance from where the student resides – State or Territory. 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 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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Nursing</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nurplac@cdu.edu.au">nurplac@cdu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Midwifery</td>
<td><a href="mailto:midwplac@cdu.edu.au">midwplac@cdu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 1

Student Name:__________________________________________________________

Student Id:____________________________________________________________

Home State:____________________________________________________________

Unit Code:______________________________________________________________

Semester and year of enrolment:___________________________________________

Placement Facility:________________________________________________________

Placement dates:_________________________________________________________

Section 2

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Military deployment or legal commitments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car accident or sudden theft of motor vehicle</td>
<td>National Emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unforeseen family circumstances (bereavement, serious illness of a family member or personal/family trauma)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is my__________________ request to cancel a placement under the ‘Extenuating Circumstances for non-attendance to allocated placements’.

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

| Medical certificate (medical certificates must include a start date and end date) | Evidence of military deployment or legal commitments |
| Police case number and incident report of accident | 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 requirements not current
• Childcare
• Distance to travel
• Public transport
• Financial situation

I also understand that if I am not supported in my application of Extenuating Circumstances I am at risk of failing the unit.

Signature: ______________________________________________ Date: ______________________________