

Faculty of Humanities Guidelines on approval of student placements

These guidelines are for those intending to introduce a new programme to include a placement, or amend an existing programme to include a placement, whether optional or compulsory, within the UK or overseas.

The QAA Code of Practice on Work-based and Placement Learning (September 2007), states that placement learning is: “***the learning achieved during an agreed and negotiated period of learning that takes place outside the institution at which the full or part-time student is enrolled or engaged in learning ... the learning outcomes are intended as integral¹ parts of a programme of study.***”²

The Teaching & Learning Support Office is producing some ‘**Principles and Guidance for student placements on taught programmes**’ which should be followed for existing and new placements. However, these Faculty guidelines set out items for consideration for those setting up a new placement, information on which should be included within the documentation provided for a new or amended programme, as outlined below.

The University's Guidance states that placements may fall into one of the following four main categories:

- Academic placement
 - A period of study at a university or comparable institution
 - Placements may be specific to the programme of study or generic e.g. via Socrates-Erasmus exchanges
- Work placement
 - To gain work experience relevant to the programme
 - Placements may include *inter alia* industrial experience, language assistantships
 - Teaching practice, as part of a teacher training programme
 - Placements may be paid or unpaid
- Research placements
 - Research projects performed at external laboratories or equivalent
- Clinical placement
 - A period of work-related learning in a clinical setting including optional (elective) placements

Where Schools are intending to introduce a period of study abroad for undergraduate programmes, contact should be made with the [Study Abroad unit](#) for advice on setting up the placement and, if the placement takes place through an institutional exchange agreement, for recording the number of students in and out.

Your [Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Administrator](#) can provide further advice about your proposal and the level of documentation which is required. The following information provides a general indication of the process:

1. Where a placement is part of a new programme of study

Where the intention is to introduce a new programme with a placement element, the procedures for the proposal of a new programme should be followed as normal. However, section 4 of the NPP2 (Placement Learning / Study Abroad) should include consideration of the items listed under section 3 below.

2. Where a placement is added to an existing programme or pathway

¹ If the placement is credit-rated or must be completed as part of the programme, then the placement is integral.

² <http://qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section9/default.asp>

The introduction of a placement is considered a **major amendment** to elements of teaching, learning and/or assessment, and so requires approval by both School and Faculty. If the placement is to be introduced as a new pathway within the programme (e.g. 'Subject X with International Study'), then the pathway will also have slightly different learning outcomes to the existing programme.

The programme amendment form should be completed and submitted, detailing the rationale for inclusion of the placement. This should include consideration of the items in section 3, below.

The following should also be submitted with the amendment form:

- Revised programme specification, outlining any revisions to the programme's aims and learning outcomes, with 'changes tracked';
- List of placement providers;
- Unit Specification for the placement (detailing ILOs, assessment methods, credit rating etc).

Where the marketing information for the programme is to change as a result:

- UG or PGT Marketing form (as applicable)

Where additional resources are required as a result:

- General Resources Form
- IS & eLearning Resources Forms
- Library Resources Form
- Financial model or revised programme costings, where additional costs are incurred by the addition of a placement.

NB: There may also be income implications for a School if adding a year long placement to a three year programme extends the duration of a programme to four years, as each FTE will be spread more thinly.

Your [Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Administrator](#) can provide further advice about the level of documentation which is necessary for your proposal.

3. Items for consideration

Along with the general rationale for the new programme or amendment, the amendment form or NPP1 submitted for a programme including a placement should include consideration of the following questions:

General

- The type (academic / work / research / clinical, home or overseas etc.) and duration of the placement;
- Whether the placement is optional or compulsory, and, where appropriate, arrangements for application or allocation of placements between students (to ensure that all those students who want a placement can get one);
- Expected additional numbers where the placement is a new part of an existing programme, and, where applicable, how the numbers are spread over four rather than three years and the financial impact;
- Whether the placement should be reflected as part of the programme award (e.g. 'with Industrial Experience / Study Abroad'), and whether a different plan code is required for these students.

Student Support & administration

- Support and contact arrangements for students before, during and after the placement, including confirmation that a Placement Organiser has been selected or will be in place before the placements begin (in accordance with the University's 'Principles and Guidance....' referred to above);
- Arrangements for preparing students prior to commencing the placement;
- Arrangements for ensuring contact with students while they are on the placement; from the perspective of both the University and the placement provider;
- Arrangements for inducting students back into their programme on their return to Manchester and ensuring that they receive the necessary information for continuing their studies prior to their return;
- Arrangements for students affected by a disability;
- Confirmation that the parties e.g. School, Placement Provider and Placement Organiser will be able to discharge their duties as outlined in the University's 'Principles and Guidance....' referred to above.

Teaching & Learning

- How the placement is integrated into the curriculum, and how it enhances the overall learning experience;
- Methods by which the placement providers have been selected, along with a list of placement providers. If the placement is to involve study abroad, the Study Abroad Unit should be contacted for advice at the development stage.
- Assessment arrangements, e.g. whether the placement is assessed and how, whether it is credit-rated,
- Progression arrangements, e.g. whether the placement and its assessment contributes to the final degree classification; arrangements for students who do not or cannot complete the placement;
- Arrangements for collecting feedback from students and Placement Providers on the placement experience;
- If the placement takes place overseas, confirmation that students and destinations will be logged on the "External Study" page on Campus Solutions, to enable retrospective reporting to the University's insurers.

4. Good Practice

- Schools should consider setting up a Blackboard space for student support while they are on placement (also peer support), incorporating discussion boards, FAQs, materials and guidance for assessment, communications to prepare them for their return, etc.
- Creation of a Placement Handbook containing appropriate procedures, contact details, responsibilities of the School and student, checklists, FAQs etc.
- The School should have a system whereby the Placement Organiser / Academic Adviser initiates fortnightly contact with those students on placement who have not been in touch with the School via other means in the interim period.

Ref:

UCEA Health and Safety Guidance.