

Chapter 10: Assessment Requirements

Overarching Assessment Requirements

While this chapter provides an overview of placement subject assessment, the assessment items can change from time to time. For updated information, please refer to the Subject Outline.

Assessment processes start when the student completes their pre-placement requirements and arrives on placement. These processes continue throughout the placement period. During their 500-hour placement, each student must complete the assessment tasks listed in the table below.

BSW and MSW (PQ) Field Education 1	BSW Field Education 2	MSW (PQ) Advanced Social Work Practicum
1. A Learning Plan	1. A Learning Plan	1. A Learning Plan
2. Student Self-Assessment Forms	2. Student Self-Assessment Forms	2. Student Self-Assessment Forms
3. Weekly timesheets	3. Weekly timesheets	3. Weekly timesheets
4. Three integration sessions	4. Three integration sessions	4. Three integration sessions
5. Three journal entries	5. Three journal entries	5. Three project reflections
6. A placement presentation	6. A placement presentation and theory analysis	6. A placement presentation and project report

How the Student is Assessed

As outlined in Chapter 1, each student's completion of placements will be determined by:

- The student's satisfactory completion of the assessment material listed above. (A Subject Coordinator will monitor the student's participation in integration sessions and contact the FELO if there are concerns).
- The progress scores and feedback in the Field Educator's (or Task Supervisor's) Assessment Forms.
- In-placement discussions between stakeholders.

To assess the student's progress on placement, the Field Educator or Task Supervisor (if applicable) are asked to use the capability levels and ASWEAS guidelines (AASW, 2012, 2023a) listed in their assessment forms. The FELO discusses the student's progress scores with all stakeholders and then recommends a grade of satisfactory or unsatisfactory to a Field Education Coordinator, who then submits a recommended grade during the examiner meeting.

It is important to approach the student's assessment as a collaborative, transparent process towards reaching a final decision on grades. If there are different opinions on assessment scores, the FELO must discuss this while considering the views of the student and the Field Educator (and Task Supervisor, if applicable). During liaison meetings, FELOs should highlight the need for early notice should any difficulties or performance issues arise (see Chapter 6).

The Learning Plan

A written agreement, known as the Learning Plan, must be prepared by the student and signed by all stakeholders before the end of Week 3. The Learning Plan's purpose is to ensure that:

- The student is primarily responsible for identifying learning goals that are clearly defined and linked to the learning outcomes and the AASW Practice Standards 2023.
- The student is primarily responsible for planning concrete methods of attaining and evaluating the learning goals.
- The student finalises their Learning Plan in collaboration with all stakeholders so that the learning outcomes are maximised and stakeholder expectations are met.
- All stakeholders understand their expectations, rights and responsibilities concerning the placement and supervisory arrangements.

The Learning Plan Process

Within the first two weeks of placement, the student prepares a draft of the Learning Plan and organises the first liaison meeting to finalise their draft with all stakeholders. This meeting must be organised by Week 3 of placement. Instructions on how to prepare the Learning Plan are presented below.

During the first liaison meeting, the Field Educator, Task Supervisor (if applicable) and FELO will contribute additional or alternative suggestions, requirements or learning tasks to finalise the Learning Plan. All stakeholders will keep a copy of the signed Learning Plan during placement. The student's finalised Learning Plan is a key resource that they use to complete their Student Self-Assessment forms later in the placement. Similarly, Field Educators or Task Supervisors may refer to the Learning Plan when completing their assessment forms.

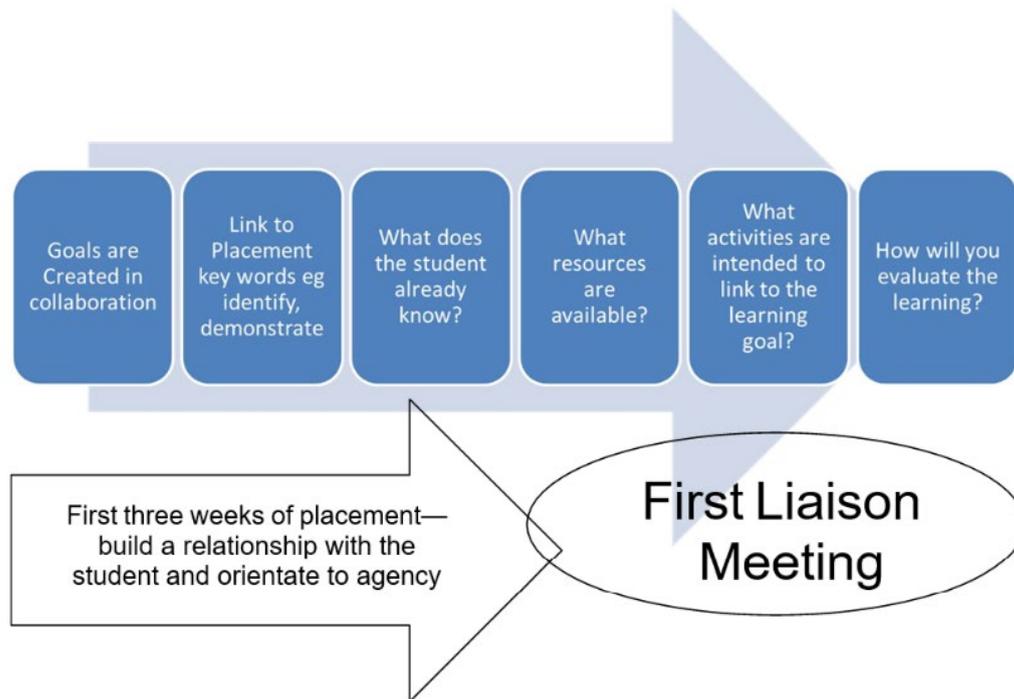
Although the Learning Plan should be finalised by Week 3 of placement, new goals, areas of interest and opportunities may emerge later in the placement. Learning Plans may then be modified to incorporate these new directions.

PLEASE NOTE: The Learning Plan is designed as a guide to action and not as an inflexible document. It may be reviewed, and if necessary, modified throughout the placement, but only after discussion and signed agreement from all stakeholders.

Preparing the Learning Plan

Students use the Learning Plan and first liaison meeting to negotiate the acceptable areas of learning they want to pursue during placement. The student's Learning Plan should therefore incorporate key ideas about their learning goals. These ideas should link to the learning outcomes (see Chapters 1, 8 and 9), the agency functions and the Field Educator (and Task Supervisor) skills. The learning goals should also be practically applicable and assessable as placement tasks completed in agency settings. In other words, the Learning Plan should 'fit' between the student's desired learning goals and the realistic opportunities for practical learning in the agency.

During the student's orientation to the agency, they must refine their placement learning needs. The pre-placement seminars and modules, and the overarching assessment requirements listed at the beginning of this chapter, should aid the student in this process. A preparation process summary is visualised in the figure below.



In addition to the learning outcomes and goals (see below), other essential Learning Plan features include:

- Placement details and resources that the student can refer to during placement
- Stakeholder expectations, including the rights and responsibilities of the student, Field Educator, Task Supervisor (if applicable) and FELO; these expectations may also detail the frequency and length of structured supervision sessions
- Stakeholder signatures indicating a shared agreement with the Learning Plan.

Student's Learning Outcomes and Goals

Students will write learning goals that indicate:

- What learning will be accomplished during placement
- What learning outcome is relevant to each learning goal
- Which AASW Practice Standards 2023 will be addressed when attaining each goal
- How they will learn (i.e., the practical tasks used to reach the goals)
- How all stakeholders will know that students have achieved the goals (i.e., how progress towards the goals will be monitored and assessed)
- When they achieve their goals (i.e., the timeframe that students will work on a particular goal).

The following examples identify conceptual, skills-based and personal goals to guide the student's development of learning goals.

Conceptual goals are concerned with the acquisition of knowledge. The student might write conceptual learning goals relevant to:

- Social and behavioural theories
- Social welfare and community practice, theories, frameworks and models
- Legislation and social policies that underpin the agency's practice

- Specific agency policies and procedures
- Knowledge of available community resources.

Skill-based goals are concerned with developing skills such as:

- Communication
- Counselling
- Group work, including facilitation or effective participation in small group committees and meetings
- Community development and education
- Conflict management
- Client assessments
- Research and coordination
- Professional practice training.

Personal goals may be concerned with:

- Values (e.g., challenging 'long held' family of origin beliefs)
- Use of self (e.g., behaviours, attitudes, value stances or conflicts that enhance or are barriers to learning)
- Transitioning from student to professional practitioner
- Developing as a reflective practitioner.

Field Educator and Task Supervisor Contributions and Expectations

Field Educators and Task Supervisors support the student while they are preparing the Learning Plan by specifying the student's:

- Placement details, including the workplace, work period and schedule
- Preparation for structured supervision sessions
- Access to formal and informal supervision
- Required quality of written work, including record keeping
- Required performance with agency-specific procedures
- Responsibilities for sending signed timesheets to the FELO every fortnight.

This initial stage of placement helps to clarify stakeholders' learning expectations within the scope of the agency setting. Students undertaking BSW Field Education 2 or MSW (PQ) Advanced Social Work Practicum should build upon their Field Education 1 experience by extending, consolidating or elaborating on their developed skills and knowledge.

PLEASE NOTE: Students enrolled in BSW Field Education 2 or MSW (PQ) Advanced Social Work Practicum will identify learning outcomes that are more complex and sophisticated than those they devised for Field Education 1.

Reflective Journal Entries

The student's journal entries contain reflections on their placement practice. These three entries are personal, reflective and analytical exchanges between the student and the FELO. The journal's purpose is to ensure students take the time to reflect seriously on the work they are undertaking by contemplating how their experiences fit with their previous life history, professional development as a social worker and personal understanding of the world. Writing is one way that students can organise, examine and learn from their professional experience.

Each journal entry should address a specific experience on placement. The entry should be critically analytical and identify how a situation or incident was understood, dealt with and re-evaluated. The focus should describe not only the event but also the student's reactions to the event. The student should ask, "What did I feel, think and do during the event?" The student should also make links between their practice and what currently informs their practice (i.e., their academic knowledge learned from coursework).

By reflecting on their experiences, the student should identify areas of learning. Some students have found it useful to include media articles, cartoons, agendas or summaries of specific incidents that highlight a particular understanding or experience.

PLEASE NOTE: The FELO will likely be the only person who will read the student's journal. To maintain confidentiality, all students should use their JCU student email address to submit journals to the FELO.

Journal Entry Topics

Students are encouraged to honestly record and critically analyse their responses to placement experiences. Students should reflect on:

- Their feelings, thoughts and actions
- Perceived organisational issues
- Perceived professional and personal dilemmas or issues regarding values and ethics
- The supervision process and content discussed during supervision sessions
- Their integration of practice and theory
- Identified learning experiences.

PLEASE NOTE: Reflective journals are confidential documents the students will share with the FELO. The student is welcome to share the journal with their Field Educator or Task Supervisor to stimulate discussion, but this is not a requirement. If the Field Educator or Task Supervisor asks to see the student's journal, the student has the right to refuse.

The following prompts may stimulate the student's thinking about what to include in their reflective journal:

1. What values lie behind the way I performed?
 - a. Who has these values and what do they imply?
 - b. Is there a value conflict? If so, how do I deal with this?
2. Which theoretical ideas could apply to this situation?

3. What were the key requirements for the intervention?
4. What do I need to know before I manage such a situation better?
5. What client groups, personnel and organisations have I interacted with today? (e.g., consider staff meetings, bureaucracies, home visits, casework, group work or supervision. You could explore the issues that unite or divide the staff, how conflict is dealt with and how power and competing interests can be seen in agency procedures).
6. What skills have I practised? How well did I practise them?
7. How else could I have practised?
8. What further development of my knowledge and skills is necessary?
9. What are my strengths and weaknesses?
10. How am I managing feedback about myself from others?
11. What do I like and dislike about myself as a practitioner?
12. How does my use of self impact what I am trying to achieve?
13. What issues need to be raised with stakeholders?

REMEMBER: LearnJCU offers three different journal templates for reflection. Students should choose a template that best supports them through the process of critical reflection. This process should be supported and informed by the FELO's feedback. While the student is responsible for submitting journal entries, the FELO is responsible for promptly returning their review of the entries.

Project for MSW (PQ) Advanced Social Work Practicum

MSW (PQ) students are expected to apply advanced levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. Students are therefore asked to include a small project in their MSW (PQ) Advanced Social Work Practicum placement. At the start of placement, each student must negotiate the project's parameters with their Field Educator and Task Supervisor (if applicable). The project must be relevant to the agency and suit the student's learning goals.

A core imperative for social work research is that it is doable, has a valid purpose, makes a positive difference and increases social justice. Therefore, the student's project must be useful to the agency and the people who use the service. The project could be part of the agency's larger research agenda or it could be a small stand-alone project. Possible projects could include, but are not limited to, developing or completing a:

- Small literature review and summary of current research in the student's field of practice
- Systematic literature review pertinent to the student's field of practice
- Resource for the agency to use, such as a summary of findings from an article (e.g., an easily read poster)
- Research or project proposal
- Ethics application
- Data collection (e.g., feedback or opinion survey) or analysis task
- Dissemination task (e.g., small report, blog or article)

- Review of policy, procedures or guidelines
- Process review with a critical analysis of an intervention, interview or meeting
- Content analysis of relevant social work documents
- Report on how theory is applied in the student's field of practice.

Project Reflections

Each student reports their progress with the project to stakeholders during the third liaison meeting. However, project reflections provide the student with a legitimate reason to stop, take a breath and reflect on their integration of the project work in their placement with the FELO. This reflection time may promote and establish the student's habits of being a critically reflective professional practitioner.

Project reflection templates and project training resources are available on LearnJCU. The student must submit their three project reflections to their FELO at regular intervals throughout the placement. This will enable the FELO's review and feedback on the student's critical reflection skills. While the student is responsible for submitting project reflections, the FELO is responsible for promptly returning their review of the reflections. If this does not occur, students should discuss the delay with their FELO, and if the delay is not satisfactorily resolved, students should contact a Field Education Coordinator.

Timesheets

While on placement, students are expected to be accountable and they must log their time while keeping a record of the activities they have participated in. Students should record their daily activities in the Timesheet template available on LearnJCU. Weekly timesheets must be signed by the student and their Field Educator or Task Supervisor, and the signed timesheets should be regularly sent to the FELO. The FELO will keep a record of these timesheets.

Absences From Placement

The student may need to change their ordinary schedule if unavoidable circumstances, such as illness, personal crises and emergencies, arise. Students will need to manage these challenges professionally. For example, students are expected to notify their Field Educators and Task Supervisor (if applicable), arrange to have appointments cancelled or rescheduled, extend deadlines and appropriately transfer or defer any other duties and responsibilities to their Field Educator or Task Supervisor.

If students lose days due to unavoidable circumstances, they must negotiate with all stakeholders and plan how to meet the 500-hour placement requirements (AASW, 2023a). If students are likely to be absent for more than three days, the FELO must be notified.

Absence from placement for more than a fortnight will require stakeholder considerations of the placement's viability. All stakeholders, and possibly a Field Education Coordinator or the Academic Lead Field Education, will need to be involved in this discussion.

Research Time

Research, reading and reflection are important to each academic placement subject. Students should spend up to four hours researching per week (also called library time), and they should discuss their research during supervision sessions.

Students are entitled to up to four hours of research time a week (pro-rata for part-time placements), but they should discuss when and how this time is used with the Field Educator or Task Supervisor (if applicable). Research time cannot be 'saved up' and taken as a block. If it is

not used during the current week, it is lost. This research time must be recorded in the student's timesheet, and it cannot be used to shorten the placement.

Research should be logged as a separate task from reflective journaling and completing placement assessment. However, the student can write what they learned from their research in their journal entries while reflecting on how they link theory to practice. If the stakeholders become aware that the student is spending more research time than recommended, they may need to discuss the student's time management skills and management of this challenge.

Students engaged in a research-focused placement will research and write for most of their placement. This necessitates a different structure of research time and activities on placement.

REMEMBER: Students must record all absences and research time in their timesheets.

Integration Sessions

Integration sessions involve three two-hour workshops held during different times of the student's placement. During the integration sessions, the student engages with their peer group either online or in person. The sessions encourage participants to relate required readings of theoretical knowledge with their placement experience.

Each student's participation in all three integration sessions is **compulsory**. Students and Field Educators (or Task Supervisors) must prioritise these sessions by ensuring that there are no clashes with other placement activities. Up to 15 hours of the integration activities can be logged as part of the student's placement time, but this time varies depending on the intensity of each integration session and the student's engagement with the content.

Students are expected to further explore placement topics through their supervision sessions, liaison meetings or additional peer groups (which are ideal if there are two or more students on the placement site) and online chat sessions.

Absence From Integration Sessions

If the student misses a session for any reason, including illness or other unavoidable circumstances, they must notify the Subject Coordinator and arrange alternative coursework to make up for their absence. This written coursework will address the integration topic they missed. If the student does not make arrangements with the Subject Coordinator, their absence will impact their final grade.

Field Educator (or Task Supervisor) Assessments

To formally assess the student's placement performance, Field Educators or Task Supervisors (if applicable) must complete two formal assessments:

1. **Mid-Placement Assessment** by the second liaison meeting organised when 250 placement hours are complete
2. **End-of-Placement Assessment** by the third liaison meeting organised towards the end of the placement.

These assessments are different from the student's reflective self-assessments, which are submitted using the Student Self-Assessment Forms.

Students initiate preparation for their assessment by organising a liaison meeting and sharing their drafted self-assessment with all stakeholders before the meeting. The student's self-

assessments will then be used by the Field Educator (or Task Supervisor) to prepare their assessment form. These forms use the following progress scores:

- **Satisfactory:** This score means that progress is satisfactory and the student's learning goals are being achieved. Continued work is expected to maintain this progress during the remainder of the placement.
- **Developing:** This score serves to remind the student, Field Educator and Task Supervisor (if applicable) to pay attention to the student's learning over the remaining weeks. Further contact with the FELO may be of value to help the student manage learning challenges. This score is not available for the overall end-of-placement progress score.
- **Unsatisfactory:** This score indicates a need to immediately review the student's learning needs and update the Learning Plan to reflect these needs.

Ideally, the Field Educator (and Task Supervisor, if applicable) will engage in transparent and supportive discussions about the student's performance throughout placement. This, accompanied by the student's journaling and critical reflection on their placement experiences, should naturally inform how students complete their self-assessments, and how Field Educators or Task Supervisors complete their formal assessments.

The Second Liaison Meeting (Mid-Placement Assessment)

The second liaison meeting serves as a mid-placement milestone for stakeholders to discuss how the placement is progressing. This meeting encourages formative assessment as a continuous process of reflection and feedback throughout the placement, rather than summative assessment at the end of placement. It also provides a low-stakes indication of the student's progress, thus allowing stakeholders to review or revise the student's learning goals if necessary.

As outlined above, the student must prepare their Mid-Placement Self-Assessment Form and send it to all stakeholders before their liaison meeting. The Field Educator or Task Supervisor will refer to the student's self-assessment when completing their Mid-Placement Assessment Form. Both the self-assessment and assessment form can be discussed during the meeting.

Field Educators and Task Supervisors (if applicable) should familiarise themselves with the assessment forms at the start of the placement. Their assessment should consider how the student is progressing with their learning goals and learning outcomes, which are linked to the AASW Practice Standards 2023 specified in the Learning Plan.

During the second liaison meeting, the FELO will ask the Field Educator and Task Supervisor (if applicable) whether they think the student will receive an overall satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress score. If less than a satisfactory score is allocated, stakeholders must plan how to address any identified learning challenges during the remainder of the placement.

The Third Liaison Meeting (End-of-Placement Assessment)

The third and final liaison meeting serves as an end-of-placement milestone to assess the student's professional development and performance while also identifying opportunities for professional development in the future.

Similar to the second liaison meeting, the student must prepare their End-of-Placement Self-Assessment Form and send it to all stakeholders before their third liaison meeting. The Field Educator or Task Supervisor will refer to the student's self-assessment when completing their End-of-Placement Assessment Form. Both the self-assessment and assessment form can be discussed during the meeting.

The Field Educator or Task Supervisor (if applicable) is encouraged to use specific examples of the student's performance to write feedback in their End-of-Placement Assessment Form. The student's professional development in response to recommendations from the second liaison meeting and the Mid-Placement Assessment Form may also be mentioned. Finally, this assessment should consider the student's learning goals, learning outcomes and the AASW Practice Standards 2023 presented in the Learning Plan.

Before the placement finishes, Field Educators and Task Supervisors (if applicable) will recommend a final progress score to the FELO. The FELO will then recommend the student's final grade to a Field Education Coordinator.

Disagreements About Assessment

The FELO should be notified if there is a disagreement between the Field Educator, Task Supervisor (if applicable) or students about the progress scores. The FELO will then meet with relevant stakeholders to discuss points of disagreement. If there is no resolution, the involved stakeholders should provide separate reports to the FELO, who will discuss the situation with a Field Education Coordinator or the Academic Lead Field Education. Further information about conflict resolution can be found in Chapter 6.

Placement Presentations

As part of the third liaison meeting, the student presents a 15- to 20-minute reflection on their learning experience, the progress they have made and their identified needs for continuing professional development. The presentation is followed with time for questions and answers.

The student's presentation is expected to be professional, and they must be respectful towards all stakeholders. During the second (mid-placement) liaison meeting, the stakeholders should discuss an optimal presentation format that addresses assessment criteria, which will likely align with the student's preferred presentation style. For example, the student may choose to structure their presentation by addressing each learning outcome presented in their Learning Plan. However, this structure is optional and may need adjustment to accommodate learning experiences that were not previously written in the Learning Plan.

To address the assessment criteria, the student must:

- Outline the key obtained or consolidated skills
- Identify acquired significant knowledge
- Reflect on raised value dilemmas
- Demonstrate an understanding of how the social problems addressed in the agency can be viewed from different perspectives
- Contemplate use of self
- Identify significant areas for professional development.

The student should present specific examples to evidence their learning, refer to their Learning Plan and appropriately reference relevant research literature. After the presentation, the FELO gives the student direct feedback, and they may ask the student to complete additional work.

BSW and MSW (PQ) Field Education 1

During this presentation, the student spends 15–20 minutes addressing key skills and knowledge they attained during placement. Further, the student reflects on any value dilemmas they encountered and demonstrates an understanding of how the dilemma can be viewed from

different perspectives. Finally, the student discusses their use of self and identifies areas for professional development.

BSW Field Education 2

The presentation consists of two components. **Part A (75%)** is a written statement of learning. This statement is designed to help the student reflect on their placement learning using the assessment criteria and other requirements listed above.

Part B (25%) is a presented analysis of eco-social work. In this analysis, the student considers how the principles of eco-social justice apply to their placement setting. Further, the student explores how micro, mezzo and macro interventions of eco-social work have been used by the agency. The student should critically reflect on how the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions, knowledge and strategies of Boetto's transformative eco-social model could inform their practice and assist the agency in meeting client needs.

MSW (PQ) Advanced Social Work Practicum

The presentation consists of two components. **Part A (25%)** is a short, written report on the MSW (PQ) student's project described earlier in the chapter. This report presents the student's reflections on how the project has contributed to their learning outcomes and benefitted agency procedures.

Part B (75%) is a presented critical reflection on placement learning. This presentation is designed to help the student discuss their placement learning using the assessment criteria and presentation requirements listed above. For this subject, the presentation and following time for questions must not exceed 15 minutes.

Final Submission of Assessment Documents

The following assessment documents should be completed and submitted to the FELO within three weeks from the end of placement unless alternative arrangements have been made in writing. Failure to do this may lead to an unsatisfactory grade.

- The finalised Learning Plan
- The student's Mid-Placement Self-Assessment Form
- The Field Educator's (or Task Supervisor's) Mid-Placement Assessment Form
- The student's End-of-Placement Self-Assessment Form
- The Field Educator's (or Task Supervisor's) End-of-Placement Assessment Form
- All signed timesheets.

The FELO then reviews this documentation, completes the FELO Checklist and submits the specified documents to the Placement Team. The student's journal entries, project reflections, placement presentations, statements of learning or placement reports are **not** submitted by the FELO, but the FELO must confirm that the student completed these assessment tasks.