



Work placement guide for host employers and supervisors

ACM20121
Certificate II in Animal Care



TAFE NSW would like to pay our respect and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the Land, Rivers and Sea. We acknowledge and pay our respect to the Elders, both past and present of all Nations.

Version: 20200729

Date created: 29 July 2020

Date modified: 12 December 2022

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RTO Provider Number 90003 | CRICOS Provider Code: 00591E

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Introduction

About this guide

Work placement is an important component of TAFE Digital animal care courses. Students are required to organise and provide proof that they have work placement to finalise their enrolment.

Work placement is a purposeful, organised, supervised and assessed learning activity that integrates theoretical learning with its applications in the workplace. Work placement exposes the student to a range of work-related situations and provides a rich range of learning experiences.

This guide has been developed to provide information about work placement and practical assessment that the student will complete in the workplace and the role of the host employer and workplace supervisor.

SECTION 1: WORK PLACEMENT



Aims of work placement

The aims of the work placement are for students to:

- gain exposure to the workplace environment
- develop and practise the skills identified in the units of competency
- be assessed in a real work environment, working under appropriate supervision over a period of time
- develop the capacity to reflect on own work practices
- observe, where possible, skilled workers in action.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor in the workplace to ensure adequate supervision of the student and provide the student with relevant Work Health and Safety guidelines for your workplace.

What are the students learning?

The Certificate II in Animal Care is one of the most popular qualifications from the Animal Care and Management Training Package (ACM). The Certificate II in Animal Care is a general entry level qualification for entry into a range of sectors in the animal care industry. At this level work takes place under direct supervision with clearly defined guidelines for work activities. As well as relevant theoretical and practical skills, a good animal care worker also needs employability skills, such as the everyday attitudes and attributes that contribute to an effective work environment.

The Certificate II in Animal Care requires access to a range of animals and animal care equipment as well as workplace policies and procedures. Employers are asked to provide a range of working opportunities while providing support, to allow the student to participate in a realistic and normal working environment.

The student must complete at least 140 hours of work placement to gain the practical skills component of the course and complete their practical assessment tasks.

Course structure

Details on the course and each unit of competency can be found at:

<https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/ACM20117>.

A timetable with the delivery sequence of the units can be obtained from the student.

How can you help?

By accepting a TAFE Digital student for work placement, you are giving the student the opportunity to take the first step in their career in the animal care industry.

In your role as a workplace supervisor, you will be asked to provide support to the student to allow them to complete their practical assessment tasks in the workplace. You will need to sign off their attendance logbook and provide comment on their progress and their employability skills, such as communication, teamwork, personal attitudes and initiative.

SECTION 2: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



A successful work placement requires the collaboration and support of the student, the workplace and the workplace supervisor. This section clarifies the roles and responsibilities of these key groups.

The student

TAFE NSW students are required to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in the workplace. The student is required to sign off on a code of conduct in their workplace logbook which outlines the behaviour expected of them. This includes complying with all requirements of the workplace such as code of conduct, confidentiality, Work, Health and Safety (WHS), induction and orientation.

The student also needs to:

- provide the workplace supervisor with a copy of this *Work placement guide for host employers and supervisors* and other relevant supporting documentation
- work with their facilitator/teacher and workplace supervisor to develop a workplace training and assessment schedule
- commit to complete the tasks and activities outlined in the schedule and other related assessment activities
- keep their workplace logbook up to date.

TAFE Digital animal care section

A TAFE Education Support Officer and/or teacher will provide the workplace supervisor with appropriate support and advice when required.

The workplace supervisor

The workplace supervisor should hold a Certificate II in Animal Care or higher with at least two years post qualification experience or have at least 5 years industry experience at a supervisor level.

It is the responsibility of the workplace supervisor to:

- provide the student with appropriate orientation and induction to the work environment
- provide access and opportunity for the student to experience a variety of situations in the workplace where they can develop practical work-based skills and knowledge
- integrate learning tasks into work activities
- provide a safe and supportive work environment
- manage safety and production risks while training
- establish and maintain regular contact with the student
- work with relevant parties to provide feedback on student progress and development
- provide information or raise issues with TAFE NSW as required
- verify the student's attendance logbook and provide feedback and advice to the student on their performance, so they reach a standard considered acceptable within that workplace
- complete documentation as outlined in this guide.

Work health and safety

Work Health and Safety (WHS) is everyone's responsibility.

We appreciate your enterprise providing a safe working environment for our students. You can assist with this by:

- providing a WHS induction to the student(s)
- involving students in WHS meetings or activities
- encouraging students to report on any WHS issues that may arise
- advising the student and TAFE of any special requirements, for example, inoculations
- providing appropriate personal protective equipment or advising the student of PPE requirements.

Students also have obligations regarding WHS. Their training includes significant attention to WHS matters and they are assessed on their understanding of policies, procedures and legislation, as well as their ability to take a pro-active approach to maintain a safe work environment.

Insurance and indemnity information

TAFE NSW is committed to protect the interest of employers participating in work placement.

Details of the indemnity applicable to industry workplace employers and the benefits available to all TAFE NSW students if they are injured while participating in work placement are provided below.

Students engaged in work placement and who are not paid employees, are volunteers and have no claim on the employer's workers' compensation insurance (see below). TAFE NSW therefore provides work placement students with similar benefits to those received by employees under workers' compensation.

The following provisions apply to work placement undertaken by a student enrolled in a TAFE NSW course.

Each Host Employer has the benefit of a crown indemnity in the following terms:

TAFE NSW indemnifies Host Employers who participate in work placement programs to the full extent of any amount which they may be legally liable to pay for injury to students arising out of work placement, up to \$20,000,000 provided that:

- any claim against the Host Employer in respect of a work placement student is immediately notified to TAFE NSW
- TAFE NSW has full control and conduct of the claim against the Host Employer
- the Host Employer cooperates fully with TAFE NSW and their legal representatives
- all relevant legislation such as safety, health and welfare legislation shall apply to any workplace and to any student engaged in a work placement.

This indemnity excludes claims where:

- the WorkCover Authority charges a Host Employer with a breach under the Work Health and Safety Act where a work placement student is injured
- the Anti-Discrimination Board requires a Host Employer to make settlement with a work placement student
- a breach of law by the Host Employer is proved.

Public liability indemnity

TAFE NSW provides a Public Liability Indemnity to Host Employers participating in the work placement program. An indemnity of \$20,000,000 covers an employer's legal liability for damage occasioned to property or injury to persons caused by work placement students subject to exclusions. A copy of the Certificate of Currency is available on request.

This indemnity excludes claims for:

- damage to the employer's property in the employer's physical or legal control
- damage to an employee's property
- personal injury in respect of injury to employees (this should be covered by the employer's Workers Compensation Insurance).

Compensation for damage to host employer's property

Damage to an employer's property or property in the employer's physical or legal control caused by a work placement student is compensated provided that the damage does not stem from lack of instruction or supervision by the Host Employer. There is an upper limit on this compensation of \$200,000 per incident.

Student payment

Students engaged in work placement are volunteers. **Students must not receive payment during work placement, unless in circumstances where they are in the employment of the workplace, such as employees or trainees.**

Any payment made by a Host Employer to a student will mean that the student is considered to be a worker and no longer covered by TAFE NSW insurance. Responsibility would then rest with the Host Employer to provide worker's compensation cover.

Acceptance of student into your workplace

Once your workplace offers the student a place, please complete the *Workplace supervisor and facility checklist* form to confirm the acceptance of the student. This will allow the student to complete their enrolment.

This form asks you questions about the workplace, your qualifications and experience, provides a list of equipment and resources the student requires access to and a declaration that the student will be able to gather documentation, videos and photos in the workplace for assessment purposes.

Assessment for some units requires the student to demonstrate skills with several different types of animals. If your workplace only deals with one species or does not cover all the tasks required, this doesn't mean that they cannot do work placement with you, but the student will be required to do some work placement at another facility to cover the gaps.

TAFE NSW may contact you before approving the student's enrolment if we have any questions about the suitability of the placement for the course.

SECTION 3: ASSESSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE



The Certificate II in Animal Care is part of the national Animal Care and Management Training Package (ACM). The qualification is made up of 12 units of competency.

The student is required to meet nationally stipulated learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit of competency. Each unit has specific competency outcomes and associated assessment criteria, is measurable and based on elements, performance criteria, performance evidence, foundation skills and assessment conditions.

Practical skills evidence

Evidence of a student's competence in Certificate II in Animal Care is based on students successfully completing both knowledge and practical assessment events for each unit of competency.

Students gather evidence of their practical skills in the workplace. Generally, the key elements of the workplace assessment include:

- direct evidence portfolios
 - research and practical activities which may require access to information specific to the workplace such as animal and client information, workplace policies and procedures
 - self-reflection activities
 - task reports
 - videos or photographs of the student doing various tasks
- indirect evidence sources, such as workplace logbook, supervisor reports or phone interviews
- workplace on the job assessment when required.

On the job assessment

Where a student or workplace has difficulty providing video evidence of practical skills, we may organise an on the job assessment for the student, if we have a suitable TAFE assessors in the local area. The assessment is carried out in the workplace at a time agreed between you/the student and the assessor. The assessor would come to the workplace and observe the student carrying out various animal care activities. Arrangements would be made to ensure that the assessments do not disrupt the smooth running of the workplace nor affect the other workplace personnel.

The logbook

The workplace logbook captures the hours completed by the student. As the supervisor, you will be required to initial each shift the student does in the workplace.

Confidentiality

We ask students not to provide confidential information such as client names in their assessments. TAFE NSW retains assessments for audit purposes only. Permission to collect evidence is included on the *Workplace supervisor and facility checklist*. The student is also required to sign a confidentiality agreement and code of conduct.

If the student approaches you with a request to allow them to complete these assessments in the workplace, it is hoped that you will provide support for them to do so.

We aim to make the assessment of the student's competence as smooth as possible and we look forward to working together with your workplace to ensure that this is a positive learning experience for you and the student.

SECTION 4: WORKPLACE SUPERVISOR TIPS



Workplace supervisors play a critically important role in the assessment process. This section provides additional advice and tips on your role as a workplace supervisor in this key part of the learning experience.

Preparation for student arrival

Some of the things you may need to notify the staff in your workplace about include:

- expected dates and duration of the placement
- qualification towards which the student is studying
- any specific projects on which the student will be working.

You will need to advise the student of any specific dress or uniform requirements in your workplace, as well as where they should report on their first day and at what time.

Induction to the workplace

To enable the student to know how your workplace functions, it is required that you induct the student into your workplace. The student is required to submit a signed induction checklist to TAFE NSW once they have started their work placement (the student will provide you with this form).

An induction checklist is a helpful reference tool when inducting and orientating the student. It sets the workplace scene for the student, and serves as a prompt for you to ensure you cover all the important information. Below is a list of areas that should be covered in induction.

An induction would typically include the following:

- general introduction to the organisation/tour of the workplace and facilities
- dress/uniform standards
- start/finish times and meal times/breaks
- names and roles of staff and introductions
- overview of workplace tasks and routine procedures
- communication protocols, for example, communication board, taking phone messages, use of email/internet/computer
- treatment of confidential information
- WHS and emergency procedures.

You could also cover:

- job descriptions, particularly that of the role the student is learning
- relevant policy and procedures manuals and how to access them
- administrative procedures—report-writing protocols and standards; guidelines for recording information/statistics
- confidentiality policies, codes of practice and any other documentation pertaining to ethical issues
- relevant acts and legislation with which the student should be knowledgeable
- information or guidelines relating to providing sensitive and culturally-appropriate communication to specific client groups
- expectations of professional behaviour
- other special or specific workplace requirements.

Supervising student performance

It is recommended that you meet with the student at appropriate regular times. This meeting provides an opportunity to:

- discuss the student's progress against their course's practical assessment requirements
- discuss the student's workload
- discuss any problem areas and seek to resolve the issues
- check that their logbook has been signed as required.

Providing student feedback

Students learn through practical work experiences. Real-life situations enable students to move from knowledge to hands-on problem-solving where they can recognise first-hand how what they are learning applies to the work context.

An important part of facilitating student learning is the provision of regular constructive feedback. Receiving constructive feedback gives the student insight into their strengths and areas for improvement.

Constructive feedback is:

- individualised and relevant
- well-timed and expected
- focused on observed behaviours
- positive and encouraging
- factual (not generalised)
- followed up on at a later date.

Feedback should pay attention to both the student's demonstration of knowledge and skills and also their attitudes associated with what they are doing.

Adult learning principles

TAFE Digital students are often adults with significant life and work experience. An insight into adult learning principles will help you provide effective feedback and supervision to the student.

Adults don't fit into neat categories and don't all learn in the same way. However, adult learners generally:

- are motivated and self-directed
- like to be given opportunities to apply their existing skills and knowledge to new contexts
- are goal/relevancy oriented and will be ready to learn when they recognise a need to acquire additional skills and knowledge
- like to have their wealth of life experience acknowledged by allowing them to contribute their ideas.

It is important to keep in mind that the student is still developing their skills and should be exposed to a range of tasks in the workplace.

Feedback on-the-go

This type of feedback involves providing the student with concrete, practical suggestions, which are given either during (particularly if safety is a concern) or following a task. For example: 'Let me show you an easier way to do X'. This is feedback on-the-go.

Formal feedback

Providing the student with formal feedback involves meeting with them at a specified time to discuss their workplace performance and also to provide practical suggestions, following a particular learning experience. It is important to ensure that the feedback is given in privacy.

Debriefing after an incident

At times there will be workplace incidents that require a debrief afterwards. Debriefing is an effective way of providing immediate support to the student/staff and:

- should occur within 12 to 28 hours of the incident
- can be given individually or in a group.

Instances when formal debriefing may be helpful are:

- in challenging or unusual situations
- when accidents or near-miss incidents occur
- after emergencies.

Debriefing should:

- be conducted in a safe environment that encourages open expression (emotional, psychological and physical)
- encourage positive reactions
- discourage irrational responses or negative thinking.

Formal debriefing is an opportunity for the student/staff to:

- process in-depth what has occurred
- examine his/her response to the situation
- reflect on what could have been done differently.

A formal debriefing may also help staff/students deal with/prevent future incidents.

Thank you

We hope you find hosting a TAFE NSW student is a positive experience.

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