



Shaping Education,  
Shaping the Future.

# Master of Teaching Practice (Secondary)

## Professional Experience Handbook

Guidelines for:  
Pre-service Teachers  
School Mentors  
RMIT Staff

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## WELCOME TO PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AT RMIT

At RMIT University we view professional experience as an essential component of our pre-service teachers learning as they begin to integrate theoretical perspectives with practice. To all those who support our professional experience programs we extend our gratitude and appreciation. We aim to provide professional partners, especially our supervising educators, with support to undertake their role effectively and in a mutually beneficial way. We seek to facilitate communication between all partners to ensure shared understandings and expectations of the program. Our ongoing partnerships with schools provide invaluable opportunities for our pre-service teachers to meet the Australian Professional Standards for teachers at the graduate level and are fundamental to the development of the next generation of Australian teachers.

### STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

#### THE WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING (WIL) TEAM

The WIL Team and the Course Coordinator are the points of contact. The WIL Team administers placements in all programs, arranges placements for pre-service teachers, liaises with site coordinators and supervising teachers and oversees reports and record keeping.

The Course Coordinator will address specific questions about academic expectations of placement, including pre-service teacher practice or progress and may direct these to the relevant program manager.

#### Contact details:

<b>WIL Team</b>	Monica Fazzari – WIL Administrator Jenelle Graham – WIL Coordinator <a href="mailto:education.placements@rmit.edu.au">education.placements@rmit.edu.au</a>
<b>Course Coordinator:</b> Introduction to Teaching	N/A
<b>Course Coordinator:</b> Developing Teaching Practice	N/A
<b>Course Coordinator</b> Teaching in Curriculum Specialisations	Kathy Littlewood <a href="mailto:kathy.littlewood@rmit.edu.au">kathy.littlewood@rmit.edu.au</a>
<b>Course Coordinator:</b> Graduate Futures	Thembi Mason <a href="mailto:thembi.mason@rmit.edu.au">thembi.mason@rmit.edu.au</a>
<b>Associate Dean Partnership</b>	Kathy Smith <a href="mailto:kathy.smith@rmit.edu.au">kathy.smith@rmit.edu.au</a>

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR MASTER OF TEACHING PRACTICE PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

RMIT's Master of Teaching Practice (MTP) program is based on an inquiry approach to education that views teaching as a holistic, multidimensional, complex, dynamic, disciplined and an ethical activity. We aim to prepare caring, knowledgeable and critically reflexive beginning teachers who are committed to ongoing engagement in their lifelong learning. The aim is a research informed, adaptive expert who understands what it means to work within and across communities of educators who, as professionals, are focused on continuous improvement and who are committed to provide meaningful learning experiences, which optimise achievement for all parties involved.

### WHAT DO WE WANT PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS TO ACHIEVE FROM THEIR PROFESSIONAL PLACEMENT EXPERIENCES?

Professional experiences are crucial to the design and delivery of teacher education programs at the School of Education, RMIT. This view is articulated by people within the School of Education, by professional partners in schools and by other stakeholders including pre-service teachers and the Department of Education. Commitment to professional experience is demonstrated through the excellent systems built on a manifesto of extensive experiences, rigorous critique and sustained credibility. Continued improvement in professional experiences for all pre-service teachers depends on a sound conceptual framework.

In placing our pre-service teachers in professional experiences throughout their MTP program, they will be provided with the opportunity to be mentored within quality, authentic school communities where they can observe and experience the complexities of the teaching profession.

These experiences will enable pre-service teachers to:

- Have opportunities to develop professional relationships;
- Continue to develop content and pedagogical knowledge;
- Have ample opportunities to practice theory and theorise practice;
- Experience the implementation of the curriculum;
- Work independently and collaboratively to create appropriate experiences for learners;
- Develop effective pedagogical strategies;
- Understand and experience teaching as inquiry;
- Develop multicultural competencies;
- Develop personal professional qualities;
- Use all experiences as a basis for reflection and the development of a personal philosophy.

These broad competencies should be considered in conjunction with the specific evaluative criteria for each professional experience and the DET/ VIT “Standards for the teaching profession”.

## PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS AS MEMBERS OF SCHOOL STAFF

Pre-service teachers on professional experience are effectively members of the school staff. They are professionally responsible to the Principal (or their designated representative e.g. the Student Teacher Coordinator) subject to the same regulations and sharing the same professional commitments as other staff members, where this is appropriate. **However, pre-service teachers must not be used as part of the staffing ratio at any time of the day or in the case of staff sickness.** They may accompany children as part of the adult ratio for excursions, but they must be in the company of a registered teacher. It is strongly advised that pre-service teachers do not continue outside paid employment during their professional experience. Professional experience is a full-time responsibility. Requirements cannot be altered to accommodate paid employment.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE OUTLINE

Professional experience provides the opportunity for pre-service teachers to put into practice the theory learned in university lectures and tutorials alongside developing a practical understanding of school context. It also provides pre-service teachers with a variety of opportunities for the development and maintenance of effective relationships with children and colleagues.

Each professional experience (placement) is tied to a specific course, and pre-service teachers **must ‘pass’ each placement to pass each course**, which involves summative feedback from your supervising teacher and meeting all expectations around attendance and the RMIT Student Charter. Each professional experience course will have accompanying assessment tasks that may require students to conduct specific data collection during the professional experience, these are detailed in your course guides on Canvas and you must ensure that you have a clear understanding of what is required.

In this program pre-service teachers participate in the following professional experience courses depending on their chosen path.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE OUTLINE MASTER OF TEACHING SECONDARY (MTP - SEC)

The MTP program has been designed to provide 60 days of supervised professional experience. Discipline and Professional Studies and Professional Experience courses link content and assessment with professional practice and provide opportunities for Work Integrated Learning (WIL).

The designated WIL courses in the Master of Teaching Secondary stream are:

TCHE2605 Professional Experience: Introduction to Teaching (5 days)

TCHE2670 Professional Experience: Developing Teaching Practice (15 days)



TCHE2675 Professional Experience: Teaching in Curriculum Specialisations (15 days)

TCHE2608 Professional Experience: Graduate Futures (25 days)

TCHE2673 Professional Experience: Inclusive Teaching in Alternate Settings (Part of the WIL Suite – no placement included)

In order to graduate from the Master of Teaching Practice Program pre-service teachers are required to successfully complete the **Graduate Teacher Performance Assessment (GTPA)** task, this is conducted in their final year as part of the course **TCHE2608**. Details of the GTPA are found on the **THCE2608** course website site, and a brief description of is given in this booklet.

Year Semester	Course Information	Course Description
Y1/S1	<p><b>TCHE2605 Professional Experience: Introduction to Teaching (PX1 – 5 days)</b></p> <p>PX1 is your first opportunity to experience teaching in the school setting. You will focus on teaching individuals and small groups.</p> <p>Assessment in this placement is categorized as <b>NOVICE</b></p>	<p>This course is one of a sequence of professional experience courses designed to develop pre-service teachers' knowledge and skills to teach in school settings. It has an embedded placement component in which pre-service teachers' knowledge and skills will be applied and assessed in a real workplace context and where feedback from industry and/or community is integral to their experience. In this course, pre-service teachers will learn, practice and then be assessed on their capacity to: - set learning goals and plan lessons; teach their peers a teaching strategy that is well organised; use verbal and non-verbal communication skills; and give clear directions. Pre-service teachers are expected to seek and apply constructive feedback from their peers and from their Supervising Teacher, to improve their teaching practice and student learning. In addition, they are expected to understand and apply the key principles described in the codes of ethics and conduct for the teaching profession via an online module.</p>
Y1/S2	<p><b>TCHE2670 Professional Experience: Developing Teaching Practice (PX2 – 15 days)</b></p> <p>PX2 is conducted at the same school as semester 1 and will allow you to build on your previous experience. You are gradually expected to take on more responsibility in this placement, moving from small group teaching to whole class teaching.</p> <p>Assessment in this placement is categorized as <b>NOVICE</b></p>	<p>This course provides pre-service teachers with opportunities to begin to demonstrate their understanding of the nexus between the theories and practice of teaching. Drawing on a range of research and through application in practical settings they will begin to develop an understanding of: - learner characteristics; principles of learning and teaching; classroom management strategies; and the importance of developing a professional learning trajectory. Pre-service teachers will be assessed on their ability to: - implement a range of teaching strategies; design effective learning sequences; and critically reflect on their own professional needs. Pre-service teachers will also continue to maintain an evidentiary portfolio.</p>
Y2/Flex semester (Jan-Feb)	<p><b>TCHE2675 Professional Experience: Teaching in Curriculum Specialisation (PX3 - 15 days)</b></p> <p>PX 3 will introduce types of assessment and their purpose. You will focus on how you might use</p>	<p>In this course pre-service teachers will critically evaluate a teaching scope and sequence with their peers and suggest how it might be improved or modified. They will use a variety of assessment strategies and evidential data to identify what students already know and what they are ready to learn. Using their knowledge of assessment strategies, pre-service teachers will plan a lesson</p>

	<p>assessment data to shape planning in order to enhance student learning.</p> <p>Assessment in this placement is categorized as <b>CONSOLIDATING</b></p>	<p>sequence based on curriculum and assessment data that demonstrates an understanding of student learning needs. In addition, they will develop skills and strategies for providing feedback to students, to the supervising teacher and where possible to parents and carers.</p>
<b>Y2/S1</b>	<p><b>TCHE2673 Professional Experience: Inclusive Teaching in Alternative Settings</b></p> <p>PX4 focuses on theoretical approaches to teaching within a range of social and cultural contexts. It does not involve a supervised placement but is part of the PX suite.</p>	<p>This course provides pre-service teachers with an opportunity to trial and reflect on a range of approaches and orientations towards learning and teaching with 21st century learners, classrooms, schools and communities. The course has a strong focus on teaching for equity, diversity and inclusion across and within a range of social and cultural contexts. This course builds upon educational theories explored throughout the program allowing students to apply and reflect on this learning in their teaching practice.</p>
<b>Y2/S</b>	<p><b>TCHE2608 Professional Experience: Graduate Futures (PX5 – 25 days)</b></p> <p>PX6 provides you with a capstone experience which will give you the opportunity to integrate, critically reflect on and consolidate what you have learned in your program. <b>During this placement you will conduct your Graduate Teacher Performance Assessment (GTPA).</b></p> <p>Assessment in this placement is categorized as <b>GRADUATING</b></p>	<p>This course is the culmination of a sequence of professional experience (work integrated learning) courses designed to develop pre-service teachers' knowledge and skills to teach in educational settings. In this capstone course, pre-service teachers will draw on learning from courses across the program and from professional experiences in schools/ educational settings. They will learn, practice and then be assessed on their capacity to complete a teaching and learning cycle in a school/ educational setting and to demonstrate their work-readiness by submitting a Graduate Teacher Performance Assessment (GTPA) task. Pre-service teachers must successfully complete both the 20-day placement (assessed by the mentor) and the GTPA task (assessed by academic university staff) to pass this course and the program.</p>

In professional experience courses pre-service teachers will learn about their future role as an educational professional. The feedback that they receive from lecturers, supervising teachers and others on Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activities and assessment will be vital for their learning.

All professional experience in these courses are formally supervised and assessed by registered teachers. Pre-service teachers have the opportunity to teach in different types of schools (local, rural, regional, remote, international), different sectors of schooling (public, independent, special needs, alternative schooling philosophies), different compositions of schools (size, demographics, curriculum) different year levels, and different settings.

## GRADUATE TEACHER PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (GTPA)

The GTPA is an authentic culminating assessment designed to demonstrate pre-service teachers' competence in classroom practice assessed against the Graduate Teacher Standards (Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, AITSL, 2011). In completing the GTPA, pre-service teachers



demonstrate the complete planning, teaching, and assessing cycle. They also show how they use evidence of student learning during their final-year professional experience placement.

As part of the assessment, pre-service teachers use available data to explain what they know about the students in their class, students' academic achievement levels, and their learning needs. Pre-service teachers then show how well they can use this information to modify and transform their teaching practices to help students succeed in their learning by:

- Planning lessons with consideration for learners needs;
- Teaching planned lessons to their students taking into consideration the learners needs;
- Assessing students based on the lessons taught;
- Reflecting on the effectiveness of their planning and teaching, by reviewing student work samples and assessment data as evidence of their learning.

The teaching performance assessment is embedded within the final professional experience course of each RMIT initial teacher preparation program. During this course the pre-service teachers will be provided with detailed information about the GTPA requirements, the GTPA content and format, and the Teaching Performance Expectations.

We ask schools and supervising teachers to support the pre-service teacher to complete their GTPA by giving them access to appropriate student data, in order that they might demonstrate the planning, teaching and assessing cycle.

## SETTING PROFESSIONAL GOALS

During their work in university courses, pre-service teachers have been involved in identifying professional goals. During this professional experience block, they are to work towards achieving a specific professional development goal that they have identified. Pre-service teachers should use the professional experience assessment criteria to identify the competencies they feel they need practice in and then choose a specific goal to focus on. The goal chosen should be directly related to the pre-service teachers' own needs or strengths. The pre-service teachers' task is to:

- Discuss their professional goal and practical ways to work on this, with their supervising teacher
- Ask their supervising teacher to provide specific written and verbal feedback on the goal
- Reflect on the written and verbal feedback from their supervising teacher.

Over the duration of the professional experience, it is envisaged that the pre-service teacher will develop new goals and refine others as progress is made. Pre-service teachers should continue to set professional goals and seek feedback throughout their professional experience.

## PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PLACEMENT - CHECKLIST

### PRIOR TO PLACEMENT

- Ensure you have obtained a Working with Children Check and uploaded to RMIT [InPlace](#).
- Ensure you have completed and signed the RMIT WIL Agreement via [InPlace](#). This is completed once for the entire program.
- Where possible, arrange a time to visit the school setting prior to placement to meet your supervising teacher.
- Advise the WIL Team and update online at MyRMIT any changes to your contact information, residential address and enrolment information.
- Advise the WIL Team of any potential conflict of interest. You cannot undertake professional experience at a setting that you:
  - Where you have a spouse/partner/family members/close friends employed at
  - Where you have children, siblings or children of family members attend
  - Currently or recently holding employment (teacher aide, OSHC worker, casual teacher of music, drama, sport etc)
  - Where you have attended as a student in the previous 10 years
- Accommodate your placement with other work and family commitments.
- Prior to placement, contact the site-coordinator to confirm your daily starting and finishing times.

### AT THE END OF PLACEMENT

- Arrange a time to discuss your Professional Experience Report with your supervising teacher, have this signed and take a copy to scan. You will need to upload your report to Canvas & InPlace.
- Collect your Confidential Emergency Contact Form from the site-coordinator.
- Return any educational resources borrowed from the school setting.

## WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

The Victorian Government's Department of Justice requires anyone working or volunteering with children to meet a minimum-checking standard. The Working with Children Check (WWCC) helps to protect children from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, violence or drug offences and findings from professional disciplinary bodies. Information about the WWCC is available at <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>.

All pre-service teachers must supply evidence of a current WWCC prior to the commencement of their first placement. Pre-service teachers must also supply a copy of their WWCC to each placement school they attend on the first day of placement.

WWCC applications must be completed online and then lodged in person at an Australia Post Office. Application information is available at <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>.

As a volunteer, pre-service teachers do not need to pay for the WWCC. Please see the RMIT Education Placements site <https://sites.rmit.edu.au/educationplacements/> for information and organisation details needed on the application form.

If you already have a current WWCC (volunteer or employee), you must update your details online to include the RMIT University.

## WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING AGREEMENT

You must complete the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Agreement via [InPlace](#). We also suggest that all pre-service teachers take the WIL ready module and micro credential: <https://www.rmit.edu.au/study-with-us/levels-of-study/short-courses/wil-ready>

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORM

Pre-service teachers must complete an Emergency Information Form. This form provides vital information to school and emergency response staff in the event of an emergency during placement. Please complete the form, place in an envelope and hand to the site coordinator on your first day of placement at each school. At the end of each placement, collect your Emergency Information form. If your details change, please complete a new form.

In addition to completing the Emergency Information Form, pre-service teachers are advised to disclose to their placement setting any medical condition that may impact on their own safety or the safety of others.

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance is crucial to the successful completion of the program and teacher registration.

Pre-service teachers are expected to attend their placements at the PX scheduled dates and at the times directed by the school. Pre-service teachers must attend for the whole day, even if they have no teaching duties.

Pre-service teachers are expected to be punctual and to observe the same hours of attendance as the educators at the school in which they are placed. When illness or emergencies prevent attendance at a school, pre-service teachers must **telephone** the school office/site coordinator or nominated staff member and their supervising teacher **before** the day commences.

Pre-service teachers must satisfactorily complete all placement days as specified in the PX course outline. Absences during a placement must be made up before the end of semester at times negotiated between the pre-service teacher and supervising teacher. A medical certificate or other

appropriate documentation should be provided to the site coordinator and the WIL Team for any absence of 3 days or more along with written advice of the agreed make up days.

The **Program Manager** must approve any significant changes to a pre-service teacher's placement schedule in writing.

In the event of industrial action by school staff including the supervising educator, the pre-service teacher should withdraw from the school for the duration of the action and notify the professional experience office. A pre-service teacher should never assume the duties of a teacher participating in the action. Absences related to prolonged industrial action should be discussed with the professional experience office.

Pre-service teachers are advised **not to** organise an appointment for their Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) during scheduled PX dates.

## PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Pre-service teachers are guests in schools and their behaviour may affect opportunities for future pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers are expected to be punctual, maintain professional communication (oral, written and electronic) with supervising teachers and peers and to demonstrate a capacity to work collaboratively and display attitudes that support professional behaviour. Pre-service teachers should dress appropriately for their school context, recognising that expectations differ between contexts. Courteous staffroom and car park usage, contribution to coffee funds and care with equipment and resources are further examples of sensible and appropriate conduct. Inappropriate remarks (verbal and written) regarding children, staff and schools must be avoided under all circumstances.

Pre-service teachers should strictly avoid giving personal details to children. Physical contact with the intention to punish, discipline or restrain children, or contact which could be misinterpreted as of a sexual nature should be strictly avoided. Pre-service teachers must ensure that their mobile phone is turned off during planning, teaching and evaluative sessions and all school meetings.

Pre-service teachers should also **be aware of and comply** with the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct: <https://www.vit.vic.edu.au/maintain/conduct/codes>

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Expectations about pre-service teacher professional behaviour extend to use of social media where there may be a connection to your work or studies. Pre-service teachers should consider their conduct in public forums outside the school such as Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter, which are easily accessed by children and school students. Pre-service teachers are advised to ensure they are not represented inappropriately in social media and that

private domains are used for personal interactions using this media. Under no circumstances can pre-service teachers make any comment about a school; its staff, children or families; in social media.

Pre-service teachers are expected to dress appropriately and present themselves in a professional manner. Most schools have dress codes that exclude, for example, jeans, thongs, body piercing ornaments, which pre-service teachers are expected to adhere to.

## FAMILIARITY WITH SCHOOL POLICIES

Pre-service teachers should ensure that they are familiar with the school's policies and practices for managing children's behaviour and for health and safety issues, including playground accidents. Pre-service teachers should contribute to the cost of photocopying for personal use, if asked to do so. Pre-service teachers need to be clear about the use of and safe practices for digital devices, including phones. Mobile phones should be turned off during teaching periods and only accessed during breaks for personal communications.

## REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Pre-service teachers are encouraged to regularly discuss their teaching performance with their supervising teacher and keep a record of any feedback in their professional experience folder. Pre-service teachers have a responsibility to seek feedback on their performance. Pre-service teachers', who are unclear about the feedback, should clarify with their supervising teacher in a professional and courteous manner. They should also discuss issues and concerns with their supervising teacher and with the site coordinator and make all reasonable attempts to find solutions to problems. There should be no surprises when the pre-service teacher receives their End of Placement Report.

## EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES OR WITHDRAWING FROM A PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

Any serious problems in a professional experience (PX) need to be addressed quickly to ensure the interests of all stakeholders are maintained. If pre-service teachers or supervising teachers experience difficulties of any nature during a placement, the issues should be discussed with the site coordinator and reported to the WIL team as soon as possible. In many cases, the WIL team can assist with strategies to resolve issues or help to negotiate appropriate modifications. If the issues cannot be dealt with at the school level, the Course Coordinator or Academic Director should be contacted.

Pre-service teachers may also like to meet with an RMIT Student Counsellor for a confidential discussion of resources, adjustments and services to support learning.

If a pre-service teacher fails to attend their scheduled placement or who withdraw from a placement without approval from the Course Coordinator and Academic Director, this will be deemed a termination of placement and will be recorded as a fail, unless there are extenuating circumstances. The pre-service teacher will be identified as at risk of failing to maintain satisfactory progress and managed according to [Assessment and assessment flexibility policy](#).

## STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY AND AUTHORISATION

Confidentiality of school and children's information must be maintained at all times. References to specific children and schools should be deleted when reproducing work samples and case studies. Collection of children's work for sample illustration must be authorised by the supervising teacher and, where possible, the parent. Children may only be photographed, audio or videotaped with prior parental/ legal guardian permission; any video or images of children are the property of the School and are not to be removed from the premises.

## TAKING RESOURCES AND STUDENT WORK FROM SCHOOLS

Any books or resources borrowed from schools during the placement must be done so with permission from the school and returned before the end of the placement. Any costs related to loss or damage of school property use is the pre-service teacher's responsibility. Electronic resources remain the property of each school and can only be downloaded with school permission. Commitments to assess children's work must also be discharged and any work returned before the end of the placement. Course results may be withheld pending return of resources or children's work to the school.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### ROLE OF THE SITE COORDINATOR (OR DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE)

The site coordinator is the designated school staff member responsible for the management of pre-service teachers in the school, they would be expected to:

- Collect the confidential Emergency Contact form and course information from the pre-service teacher.
- Explain your expectations to the pre-service teacher including start and finish times, break times, dress code, mobile phone policy, car parking and attendance at meetings.
- Ensure the pre-service teacher is informed of OHS regulations, especially emergency procedures.
- Familiarise the pre-service teacher with the organisation of the school, including daily organisation, management structure, meeting and other schedules.
- Ensure the pre-service teacher receives a copy of the signed End of Placement report. It is the student's responsibility to submit their report to RMIT.



- Invoicing RMIT for placement requires all invoices to have an RMIT Purchase Order (PO) number. Once placement has commenced the WIL Team will request a Purchase Order from RMIT Finance who will then email you the PO. Once you receive the PO, please raise a tax invoice and return to [apinvoices@rmit.edu.au](mailto:apinvoices@rmit.edu.au). You must include the RMIT PO number on your tax invoice

## ROLE OF THE SUPERVISING TEACHER

During the professional experience the supervising teacher is the main source of professional support and guidance for the pre-service teacher. The supervising teacher:

- Is a consistent, positive teacher role model, with sound knowledge of curriculum and effective teaching practice.
- Communicates about the service requirements and the pre-service teachers' responsibilities.
- Gives feedback, positive and constructive, to the pre-service teacher and evaluative RMIT lecturers.
- Facilitates open and honest communication
- Challenges pre-service teachers to critically analyse their practice and encourages them to seek solutions to the problems and challenges of situations/ issues as they arise.
- Encourages discussions about teaching pedagogy and associated theories and philosophies.
- Assesses the pre-service teacher and completes the Interim and End of Placement reports.

The process of developing pre-service teachers is the responsibility of both the University and the supervising teacher, together. There are some aspects of a pre-service teachers' development that can be initiated at university but can only be developed in the context of professional experience. Some examples are observation and assessment processes in order to respond appropriately to the learning interests and needs of children and implementing both planned and spontaneous pedagogical experiences based on these insights.

If concerns arise during the placement or school staff are not satisfied with the pre-service teacher's progress, matters should be discussed with the Course Coordinator. If your concerns persist or if you feel the pre-service teacher's progress is unsatisfactory, the Course Coordinator will arrange an RMIT University staff visit to support you and the pre-service teacher. If the pre-service teacher is at risk of failing the placement a period of time should be agreed upon in which they have an opportunity to improve their performance.

## PROTOCOLS FOR SUPPORTING PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PROGRESS

Pre-service teachers should meet with their supervising educators to discuss their teaching performance regularly throughout placement. If either the supervising teacher or pre-service teacher has concerns about the placement, an Expression of Concern Form should be completed

and sent to the WIL team, so that further action, such as a visit by an RMIT staff member can be taken.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

To complete their program, pre-service teachers must successfully complete the professional experience components of each course and in addition pass the coursework assessments associated with that course. The overall responsibility for the assessment of professional experience remains with the University, however, it is supervising teachers provide summative feedback that attests that the pre-service teachers are meeting the expectations of the VIT code of conduct and the Graduate Teacher Standards.

There are two points during each PX placement where formal feedback is given to pre-service teachers', these are at the midpoint and the end of each PX placement.

### INTERIM PLACEMENT REPORT

At the mid-point of placement, pre-service teachers should schedule a discussion with their supervising teacher to review their initial progress and to complete the interim report form. It is the pre-service teacher's responsibility to ensure this conversation takes place. A copy of the completed form, signed by the supervising teacher, should be sent to the WIL team **only** if two or more areas are identified, as 'needs improvement' the WIL team needs to be notified and an RMIT staff visit organised. A copy should also be given to the pre-service teacher.

### END OF PLACEMENT REPORT

At the end of placement pre-service teachers should receive an end of placement report from the supervising teacher, which needs to be discussed and signed by both the supervising and pre-service teacher. The overall assessment needs to be satisfactory, to pass the placement. A copy of the report should be given to pre-service teacher so that they can upload it to the Canvas website for the course.

Supervising teachers should apply professional judgements using evidence of the PST's demonstrated knowledge, practice, and engagement in relation to the expected APST descriptors for the stage.

Consideration should be given for the placement context and opportunities to encounter relevant experiences enabling the PST to demonstrate the APST.

Please use the following ranking for your evaluation:

<b>Assessment Scale for Descriptors</b>	
<b>Exceeds (E)</b>	APST descriptor has been exceeded
<b>Met (M)</b>	APST descriptor has been met
<b>Not Met (NM)</b>	APST descriptor has not been met
<b>Not Encountered (NE)</b>	No opportunity to meet the APST descriptor

The School of Education reserves the right to make the final decision on whether a student has successfully passed a placement.

## UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

While most pre-service teachers will have highly rewarding and successful professional experience, some may find it a challenge. Site coordinators and supervising educators should discuss and document concerns with pre-service teachers, so they can make every effort to take advice on board, address areas of concern and improve performance.

Concerns may arise at any time during the placement and may not become apparent until after the mid-point of the placement. When the course coordinator receives notification of concerns, they will liaise with the site coordinator and Academic Director, Professional Experience to implement support strategies.

On occasion, the site coordinator or supervising teacher will judge performance as unsatisfactory. When a pre-service teacher receives an unsatisfactory result for their placement, they will fail the course and be identified as 'At Risk' in accordance with the Assessment and assessment flexibility policy. The pre-service teacher will be asked to attend an 'At Risk' support meeting with an academic advisor after the release of result, to discuss repeating the relevant course. Pre-service teachers need to be advised however that this will substantially add to the duration of the program, as re-enrolment in the course in subsequent semesters will need to occur.

## DELAYED OR DEFERRED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Pre-service teachers must complete the number of placement days specified for the course in the semester of enrolment. If days are missed due to illness, bereavement or public holidays, days must be made up at the discretion of the school within the Semester of course enrolment. However, make up days cannot be scheduled where they conflict with RMIT University classes. Failure to complete the number of days or minimum teaching time within the semester of enrolment will result in a fail grade.

Pre-service teachers who cannot complete the specified requirements of a course by the due date, including scheduled placement days for extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness or injury), must submit either an Application for Extension of Time form or apply for Special Consideration. <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/student-essentials/assessment-and-exams/assessment/special-consideration>

On occasion, pre-service teachers face difficulties that mean that they, or teaching staff, consider that they are unable or unprepared to undertake their placement at the usual time. Examples of such situations are:

- Where a pre-service teacher has a mental or physical illness, which severely limits their capacities for a time-limited period.
- Where a pre-service teacher has been selected for the program and subsequently found to need further support in communication/language skills.
- Where pre-service teachers have not completed the required academic work (or briefing sessions) prior to the beginning of placement.

If pre-service teachers consider they are in such a situation, they should in the first instance, consider enrolling in the relevant course in a different semester and in the case of mental or physical illness, approach the Equitable Learning Service for advice.

## TERMINATION OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

When on professional experience we expect all pre-service teachers to act professionally. A placement may be terminated at the discretion of the school by the principal or site coordinator where that conduct contravenes the Student Conduct Policy. For example, if you:

- Behave in a manner that is indecent or offensive to the extent that it is likely to make any others feel unsafe in the RMIT learning and working environment.
- Harass, intimidates or bullies any person (or attempts to).
- Wilfully, recklessly or negligently engages in a course of action that causes or may cause physical or psychological harm or arouses apprehension or fear, either directly or indirectly, physically, verbally, electronically or by any other means.
- Engage in any other conduct, whether within or outside RMIT premises, that may be prejudicial to the good order and discipline of RMIT or is likely to bring RMIT into disrepute.

**For the complete Student conduct policy:** [www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management/governance/policies/student-conduct-policy](http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management/governance/policies/student-conduct-policy)

General misconduct will be forwarded to a senior officer in the School of Education. General misconduct and academic misconduct may result in expulsion or suspension from the program.

If a pre-service teacher makes a unilateral decision to terminate their placement without having completed the mandated total teaching days, or without consulting the WIL team, they will fail the professional experience course in which they are enrolled. They will be identified as "At Risk" as per the assessment and assessment flexibility policy.

If a placement is terminated at an early stage, the Academic Director, Professional Experience and Program Manager will carefully review the situation and the learning needs of the pre-service teacher and make recommendations about:

- Opportunity to repeat the placement.

- Special requirements in relation to placement.
- Requirements in relation to course enrolment policy.
- Nature of the learning environment, and appropriate work.
- Pass on this information to the site coordinator.

Termination of Placement form is found on the Education Placements [website](#).

## UNRESOLVED CONCERNS

Very occasionally, pre-service teachers may have issues or concerns about their professional experience. Where issues between a pre-service teacher and supervising teacher cannot be resolved the first course of action is to discuss the concerns or issues with the site coordinator. If this fails to resolve the issue, the pre-service teacher should contact the course coordinator and provide an explanation of the issue in writing using Expression of Concern Form (see Forms Section of handbook). This may prompt a visit by an RMIT staff member to provide additional support.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE POLICIES

### PLACEMENT POLICY & CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All pre-service teachers are placed in a registered school or centre. Government schools are registered with the Department of Education and VIT and non-Government schools are registered with the Registered Schools Board. Students may need to travel up to 90 minutes one way to reach the assigned placement setting, this could be more if you rely on public transport.

Normally, a pre-service teacher will not be placed at a site where there is a potential conflict of interest. Pre-service teachers must identify, declare and advise potential conflicts of interest upon enrolment. Examples of different types of conflicts of interest that typically arise with respect to Professional Experience include, but are not limited to:

- Where you have a spouse/partner/family members/close friends employed at
- Where you have children, siblings or children of family members attend
- Currently or recently holding employment (teacher aide, OSHC worker, casual teacher of music, drama, sport etc)
- Where you have attended as a student in the previous 10 years
- Placement dates are set in advance and absences for work or other commitments are not permitted
- Pre-service teachers cannot be paid whilst on placement

Potential conflicts of interest must be declared in writing to the WIL team prior to or at the time of enrolment in the Professional Experience course. Conflicts of interest should be advised every time a Professional Experience course is undertaken. Failing to declare a conflict of interest may result in the termination of the placement.

Please note placement dates are set in advance and absences for work or other commitments are not permitted. Special needs or circumstances are considered when arranging placements. However, special arrangements must meet course requirements and contribute to the pre-service teacher's successful development as an educator or practitioner capable of participating fully in the responsibilities of the profession. <https://www.rmit.edu.au/study-with-us/applying-to-rmit/local-student-applications/entry-requirements/inherent-requirements/education-teaching>

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Pre-service teachers are advised to take the following protective measures regarding their own health while on placement:

- Ensure immunisation against Whooping Cough, Chicken Pox, Hepatitis, Measles, Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Tetanus and Rubella are up to date.
- Ensure that you are physically healthy during placement.
- Take care with personal hygiene while on placement.

## SCHOOL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY INDUCTION

Pre-service teachers should ensure that they are aware of:

- Occupational health and safety procedures in the school and on relevant excursions and camps.
- Accident, first aid and emergency procedures and responsible staff.
- Policies relating to allergies and anaphylactic shock.
- Staff and children duty of care, welfare and discipline policies.
- Privacy legislation requirements.
- Professional expectations of student teachers.
- Policies regarding daily arrival and departure, leaving the school during working hours and authorised access outside normal working hours.

Pre-service teachers should actively seek this information if it is not provided. In the event of a medical emergency, pre-service teachers should offer emergency first aid commensurate with their first aid qualifications and experience and/or contact an ambulance or medical assistance immediately. All Occupational Health and Safety incidents in which pre-service teachers are involved should be reported to the school and the RMIT University WIL team.

The process steps if an accident or incident occurs during a WIL activity are:

- [Manage Incident](#)
- [Manage Accident](#)

All accidents and incidents should be reported in PRIME and in InPlace.



## DISCRIMINATION, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying are unlawful in all work and education environments. If a pre-service teacher feels they have been discriminated against, sexually harassed or bullied by someone employed by a preschool or organisation at which they are on placement or by a student or client of the placement organisation, the University's Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Prevention Advisers can provide support and advice. Similarly, if a staff member or child at a placement claims that they have been discriminated against, sexually harassed or bullied by a pre-service teacher, RMIT University can provide assistance.

At RMIT, we are committed to providing a respectful and safe place to study and work.

If you are feeling unsafe or unsure what to do about threatening or unwanted behaviour, you can talk to us about your concerns and options - even if the behaviour happened off campus.

If you or someone you know has experienced unwanted or threatening behaviour - including sexual harassment or assault, please contact Safer Community at RMIT

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/support-and-facilities/student-support/safer-community>

## INSURANCE COVER

Pre-service teachers are covered by the RMIT University's Student Accident insurance policy whilst they are participating in and travelling directly to or from authorised placements. Pre-service teachers who are not officially enrolled in a placement subject are not covered by the university's policy.

For further information, please see:

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/student-essentials/work-integrated-learning/important-requirements-and-details>.

Pre-service teachers are not eligible for Work-cover because they are not employees.

## PRE-SERVICE TEACHER LIABILITY

Pre-service teachers should not be left in sole charge of children or classes and should not take over the roles of supervising educators who are absent. This includes non-teaching activities such as excursions. The legal responsibility for a class or group of children being taught by a pre-service teacher rests with the supervising educator. Similarly, pre-service teachers should not represent themselves as fully qualified teachers under any circumstances.

## IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE AT RMIT

If you or others require immediate assistance relating to mental wellbeing, such as overwhelming stress or thoughts of harming yourself or others call:

RMIT Connect (business hours)

Telephone 9925 5000

RMIT student Crisis Line (after hours) Telephone 1300 305 737  
Text 0488 884 162

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE DOCUMENTS

The following documents can be found under the Forms tab on the RMIT [website](#)

- Emergency Contact Form
- Interim Placement Report
- Pre-service Teacher Expression of Concern Form
- RMIT Staff Student Observation Form
- Placement Termination Form
- Supervising Teacher Expression of Concern Form
- Student WIL Agreement
- Tax Invoice

Program specific documents can be found under the Master of Teaching Practice tab on the [website](#)

- Placement Handbook
- Course Overview/Placement Requirements
- End of Placement Reports
- Program Progression Map