

# Educational Partnerships Procedure - Work-Based Learning

## Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) La Trobe University seeks to provide students with a range of work-integrated learning opportunities both within and outside the curriculum to enhance students' professional awareness, engagement and practice. Work-Based Learning (WBL) is one significant type of work-integrated learning.

(2) This Procedure outlines the requirements for the University to enter into partnerships with industry and other organisations for the purpose of enabling La Trobe students to undertake work-based learning as part of their course and outlines actions that are taken prior to, during and after these activities, including:

- a. minimum requirements for due diligence and risk analysis for the safe implementation of work-based learning
- b. agreement development and approval
- c. monitoring and evaluation of both individual WBL arrangements and ongoing partnerships.

## Section 2 - Scope

(3) WBL arrangements covered by this Procedure include placements or internships, where students carry out professional tasks, that:

- a. are part of a coursework course; and
- b. take place at work premises, either physical or virtual, for the purposes of students learning through work-based activity.

(4) Internal arrangements where the University is the work premise are included in this Procedure.

(5) The following work-related experiences are outside the scope of this Procedure:

- a. students undertaking projects for an industry partner within the University environment where they are under the direct supervision of an academic staff member. Agreements for this purpose are available from Legal Services;
- b. co-curricular work-related experiences that may be facilitated by the University, such as volunteering, work experience and mentoring programs;
- c. work-related activities that involve third parties solely as providers of information, guidance or feedback to students;
- d. any arrangements for work-based learning or research undertaken by graduate research candidates. Conditions for these are outlined in the [Graduate Research Candidature Policy](#).

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(6) Refer to the [Educational Partnerships Policy](#).

## Section 4 - Procedures

### Part A - Acceptable WBL Arrangements

(7) WBL arrangements may:

- a. be domestic or overseas
- b. be credit or non-credit bearing experiences, or may fulfil a milestone or course hurdle requirement
- c. be undertaken with partners with whom the University has an ongoing partnership, or as a single instance
- d. be proposed by staff or students.

(8) Students may use existing employment arrangements to undertake work-based learning where these are able to satisfy the learning requirements of the relevant subject.

(9) Where appropriate, students may receive a stipend, bursary or reimbursement of costs.

### Part B - Due Diligence and Risk Assessment

(10) All WBL arrangements with external third-party organisations and individuals must be preceded by a due diligence and risk assessment process using agreed templates. In each case, the following is required:

- a. confirmation of the current operations of the prospective partner, and their appropriateness to support student learning and the specific learning outcomes for the proposed WBL arrangement;
- b. where relevant, confirmation of the appropriateness of the facilities for the activities and for the number of students using them;
- c. assurance of currency of business registration and legal trading;
- d. establishment of a risk rating for the working environment including identifying any specific risk management requirements for each site.

(11) A site visit and/or further investigation may be required where specific risks have been identified.

### Part C - Agreement Development and Approvals

(12) The Partnership Operations team (Office of the Provost) provides support in the development and approval of partnership agreements. Subject Coordinators must contact the Partnership Operations team in the first instance when WBL arrangements are required for subjects.

(13) WBL arrangements are governed by signed agreements between the University and the partner. The type of agreement and the level of authorisation required will be determined by the extent of the partnership and whether the arrangement will form part of an ongoing partnership between the University and the third party, or whether it is a one-off arrangement.

(14) Standard WBL agreement templates are provided for this purpose on a SharePoint site with restricted access.

(15) In circumstances where an overarching WBL agreement is in place for more than one type of WBL activity or cohort, schedules may be used to define the details of instances of WBL activities.

(16) Where a partner organisation requires the use of their own agreement due to particular confidentiality or intellectual property issues, such an agreement must be approved by La Trobe Legal Services prior to any arrangement being made.

(17) WBL agreements are approved in accordance with the University's Delegations Framework. Signing authority cannot be further delegated.

(18) WBL agreements and associated materials are to be recorded on the University's student placement management system.

## **Part D - Operation of WBL Arrangements**

### **Prior to Commencement of a WBL Arrangement**

(19) Prior to commencement of any WBL arrangement, all host organisations and students are to be provided with a La Trobe WBL manual that details, at a minimum:

- a. the general responsibilities of students in undertaking a work-based learning arrangement, including adherence to policies and procedures and channels for notification of any issues;
- b. the general responsibilities of the host organisation in supporting a WBL student, including support for student learning, adherence to policies and procedures, safety and security and channels for notification of issues;
- c. processes for monitoring and supervising student progress throughout the WBL arrangement, and actions to be taken in the event of unsatisfactory progress;
- d. processes for managing critical incidents involving students, including appropriate notifications;
- e. the requirement that the WBL arrangement abides by the provisions of the [Fair Work Act 2009](#).

(20) More detailed information in relation to specific work-based learning activities will be provided to partners in individual agreement schedules and subject-related documents.

(21) Students will be made aware in advance that there may be compulsory conditions for taking part in a specific WBL activity, such as a Police Check, Working with Children Check or vaccinations. This information will be made available via the subject/course information and in any pre-WBL briefings. In the case of self-sourced arrangements, students must check and ensure they can meet any compulsory conditions required by the provider prior to commencing.

### **While Students are Participating in a WBL Arrangement**

(22) All parties involved in a WBL arrangement must behave in an ethical manner and according to the standards of the relevant profession, workplace and regulatory requirements.

(23) An Academic Supervisor and Host Supervisor must be identified for each WBL arrangement. The Academic Supervisor is responsible for working with the partner organisation to:

- a. ensure alignment of the WBL experience and subject learning outcomes
- b. monitor and supervise student progress and manage any concerns related to student performance.

(24) The Academic Supervisor is also responsible for:

- a. quality assurance of the assessment for the relevant subject/s, and
- b. assuring student wellbeing, including:
  - i. taking immediate action to support students where any safety concerns arise
  - ii. reporting any incidents or significant concerns regarding student wellbeing through the relevant

reporting mechanisms and escalating to the Dean and/or Senior Manager, Partnership Operations where appropriate

- c. ensuring that any identified potential or actual lapses in academic integrity, or unethical or unprofessional conduct on behalf of any of the parties to a WBL arrangement are monitored and managed appropriately.

### **Termination of a WBL Arrangement**

(25) WBL arrangements may be terminated on such grounds as:

- a. the safety and wellbeing of the student, staff, client or the general public is at risk;
- b. the student's conduct is deemed unacceptable or unprofessional by the host organisation or the student fails to comply with the policies and procedures of the University, agency or relevant profession;
- c. the student is unable to provide documentation that is required prior to the commencement of a WBL activity, such as Police or Working with Children Checks;
- d. failure of the host organisation to meet the terms of the agreement; or
- e. the arrangement is deemed untenable or is failing to provide adequately for the requirements of the subject.

(26) WBL arrangements may be terminated by:

- a. a student withdrawing from a subject in the usual way;
- b. the Academic Supervisor where they have identified a significant issue or, where deemed necessary, in response to a student complaint; or
- c. the host organisation.

(27) Where a host organisation requests the early termination of a WBL arrangement, consultation should occur between the Academic Supervisor and the Host Supervisor, at a minimum, before a final decision is made. Where the host organisation wishes to proceed with the termination the University cannot overturn such a decision.

(28) In these circumstances the relevant Academic Supervisor will contact the student to provide information and advice about the situation and then arrange a meeting with the student within 10 working days to discuss next steps. Where the termination is not on the basis of a student's behaviour or performance, this discussion must include:

- a. reasons for the termination;
- b. alternative arrangements to be put in place for completion of the relevant subject/s, and whether these will be in the same or a subsequent semester; and
- c. support and/or study plan adjustments to be provided to the student in the case that progression is negatively impacted.

### **Termination of WBL Arrangements Based on Student Performance**

(29) Where the termination of an arrangement is the result of a host organisation's view of student performance or behaviour, the meeting should include the relevant Course and Subject Coordinator. Where an international WBL arrangement has been organised by a third party provider a representative of the provider must also be present.

(30) Students must be advised that they are entitled to bring a support person to the meeting. During this meeting, the student must be given an opportunity to provide their perspective on events leading up to the termination.

(31) Following the meeting, the Course Coordinator or nominee is responsible for making a decision regarding:

- a. whether an alternative WBL arrangement can be sought for the student; and
- b. what reasons for the early termination of the arrangement will be documented and stored on the student's file.

(32) A School decision to refuse further allocation of a WBL arrangement to a student can only be made under the terms of the La Trobe [General Misconduct Statute](#).

## Part E - Reviews

(33) Where a student is dissatisfied with a decision made under a relevant University Statute to terminate a WBL arrangement, or to not provide a further WBL arrangement, they may appeal to the University Appeals Committee under the provisions in the [Appeals Policy](#).

(34) If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a decision made on any other grounds to terminate a WBL arrangement, or to not provide a further WBL arrangement, they may seek a review from the relevant Dean or nominee.

(35) Where a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a review by the Dean or nominee they may apply to the University Ombudsman for a further review.

## Part F - Feedback on and Review of WBL Arrangements

(36) All WBL arrangements are subject to the same quality assurance mechanisms as all other subjects that form part of La Trobe University courses, including course governance, moderation and evaluation, and student and partner feedback.

(37) All students are given the opportunity to provide feedback on their WBL experience at its conclusion through the University's normal subject feedback mechanisms. In instances where a WBL activity is not an entire subject, alternate arrangements for feedback are to be made by the arranging area in consultation with the Data and Performance Analytics (DAPA).

(38) Host organisations are also given the opportunity to provide feedback through both informal contact and formal survey mechanisms. The formal survey instrument will be approved by the Director, Quality & Standards and will be administered by DAPA.

(39) Student and partner organisation feedback should be used in determining whether an ongoing agreement should be renewed or a single arrangement repeated where appropriate. The Dean and Senior Manager, Partnership Operations are responsible for considering any sustained or serious negative student feedback and whether the WBL arrangement in question should continue to be offered to students.

## Section 5 - Definitions

(40) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. Work Based Learning (WBL): arrangements where students undertake professional tasks, in a workplace, either physically or virtually, sometimes referred to as a placement (including internal placements where the University is in the role of workplace rather than educational institution).
- b. Co-curricular work-related experiences: work-related experiences that are outside of the curriculum, not in a subject and not required or described for a course.

## Section 6 - Related Documents

### Forms and Guidelines

(41) Resources to support the implementation of this Procedure are available via the [Work-Based Learning \(Intranet\)](#).



## Status and Details

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| <b>Responsible Policy Officer</b> | Nicolette Lee<br>Executive Director, Quality and Standards<br>+61 3 9479 6480 |
| <b>Author</b>                     | Julie Larsen  |
| <b>Enquiries Contact</b>          | Quality and Standards   |