Placement Information for Supervisors

Supervision criteria
The placement is likely to be approved if the student is working in a legal environment, doing legal work using legal skills. The work must be under the supervision of a lawyer who has not less than 3 years post admission experience and who has not been subject to any disciplinary action. Lawyers who can supervise placements:

- Hold an unrestricted practising certificate as a legal practitioner
- Hold, and have held, a restricted practising certificate as a legal practitioner for at least 3 years
- Be a lawyer of at least 3 years post admission experience who is employed by the Commonwealth, State or Territory Government to provide legal services
- Be a lawyer of at least 3 years post admission experience who is employed in a corporate capacity or as in-house counsel
- Be a practising barrister of at least 3 years experience
- Be a Judge or Magistrate
- Be a tribunal member who is a legal practitioner

Legal Skills
We do not expect every placement to be able to cover all legal skills. The list below is indicative of the skills students should develop from a combination of their workplace learning and their learning in the Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice.

1. Communication skills. Both oral and written, and to different audiences, eg, clients, colleagues, other lawyers.
2. Legal drafting and writing skills. Includes drafting documents, using precedents, drafting letters and advices, practising the use of plain English, and getting the balance right between brevity and succinctness and covering the necessary issues.
3. Advocacy skills. This is the skill of being persuasive, it doesn’t necessarily just take place in the courtroom or have to be done orally.
6. Legal Research and analysis. We expect you to have quite well developed legal research skills, so the focus is on your analysis and the output of your research, eg, advice to senior partner, to client, to another section, drafting of a statement of claim etc
7. Professional skills. Understanding the professional and ethical requirements of being a lawyer.
8. Interpersonal skills. Working as part of a team, with both lawyers and others, managing clients, managing expectations, seeking feedback.
10. Reflective practice skills. Learn from what you do well, and what you don’t!
Workplace Learning – what you can do to assist the student

“Tell me and I’ll forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I’ll understand.”

Below are our suggestions to students to enhance their workplace learning.

1. **Doing.** Make the phone call, draft the document or letter, speak in the meeting or client interview…under the supervision of your workplace supervisor. Try to get timely feedback on your work and encourage constructive comment on what you could have improved.

2. **Curiosity and pro-activity.** Ask questions about why things are done a particular way, why certain choices are made, what informs a particular approach, why a document or letter is drafted in a certain way. Follow up work colleagues for feedback on tasks they have assigned you, make sure you see the finished version of documents you have worked on, ask to be included in client meetings or court events if you have worked on the file.

3. **Reflection.** Be self critical. Read your first draft of anything critically. Think about what you did well, what you could improve in any task you undertake. Apply this also to what you observe. What did others do well? Would you have done anything differently?

4. **Practice.** Drafting is a good example here, but it applies to all skills. Use explanation and feedback so that each time you practice a skill you are improving and developing.

5. **Diversity.** Sometimes projects or cases can be long running and you might only be involved in part of it. Try to get an overview of a file or project by looking at similar files or projects so you can see a beginning, middle and end.

6. **Shadowing.** Informal learning is very powerful. Sitting in on discussions, meetings, conferences, negotiations, court hearings.

7. **Resources.** Your most useful resource is probably going to be the people you are working with so make use of them. Experienced lawyers are often good role models, so observe what they do and how they do it. You may feel more comfortable asking questions of more junior lawyers, who have more recently trodden the same path you are on now. Precedent documents, advices, letters are also useful.

**Requirements of Supervisors**

- Read and sign the Application for Placement Approval which our student will give to you once they have completed it
- Supervision of the student during the placement period
- Read and sign the Placement Report which the student must complete and submit to us within 2 weeks of the end of the placement period OR
- If the student is emailing us the report, send an email confirming you have read and agree with the report
- Contact us if you have any questions or concerns about the placement or wish to make any comments about the progress of our student.

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