Policy on Allocation of Students to Workplace-based Placements

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Policy for Workplace-based Placements (Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences).

The education program in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at UWA is grounded in the principles of experiential learning, with an emphasis on learning by participating in health and human services.

The particular health issues available for learning in each environment vary. A general principle is that students need to be exposed to a range of environments to ensure they receive the diversity of experiences required to achieve the stated objectives of the graduate outcomes for each course.

- **Master of Social Work (course code 11550)**

  Students enrolled in the Master of Social Work are required to complete two placements in a human services agency. Students work within a field practice syllabus and are required to attend integration seminars. Field Education 1 (SWSP5309) is a 13 week placement students complete in Year One and Field Education 2 is a 16 week placement undertaken in Year 2.

- **Master of Public Health (course code 92550 and 92560)**

  Students enrolled in a Master of Public Health with a practice specialisation are required to complete a 24 point practicum unit (Public Health Practicum PUBH5758). This practicum consists of a placement scheme whereby students are hosted by a health-related agency for a full semester (450-490 hours). Placement may occur in the Perth metropolitan area, rural and remote areas, interstate and overseas.

1. Workplace-based placements associated with the School of Population Health

Below is a listing of the type of agencies where placements may be available:

**Practicum Sites**
- Public and Private Hospitals
- Non-Government Organisations
- Commonwealth, State and Local Government Organisations
- Commonwealth and State Organisations
- Private Sector
- Aged Care Providers
- Any site deemed suitable by the Head of School of Population Health in metropolitan or rural area within Western Australia.

2. Aims of the policy on allocation of students to practicum environments

2.1 The process of allocation of students to practicum should be transparent.

2.2 The policy must allow the Faculty to meet its objectives to:
   (a) ensure each student obtains a range of experiences;
   (b) balances student allocations with the placements available at each location;
   (c) meets any requirements set for UWA by the AASW (MSW)

2.3 Subject to 2.2, the Faculty will generally attempt to meet an individual student's first preference; however this cannot be guaranteed (see Section 5).
3. Awareness and acceptance of the policy
3.1 The School has a responsibility to ensure that students are aware of the allocation policy during their progress through their course. Students have a responsibility to understand the policy and to sign off on it prior to undertaking placement.
3.2 The number and composition of placements available may vary from year to year.
3.3 Decisions about the allocation of students to placements is the responsibility of the School, and students have a responsibility to accept and abide by these decisions.
3.4 In accepting a place in any courses within the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, students accept that they may be required to undertake a 'placement' at a location or locations other than their first preference.

4. Student participation in allocation decisions (not relevant to DPM)
4.1 Each student may be given the opportunity to indicate his/her personal preferences for allocation to particular locations by submission of the appropriate preference request.
4.2 It will be assumed that a student has no particular preferences if he/she does not submit a preference request.
4.3 The School will provide each student with information on its teaching/supervisory environments to assist him/her in indicating preferences.

5. Allocation decisions
5.1 The following factors will be considered in allocation decisions:
   a) Identified learning needs of the student (MSW, MPH)
   b) Meets the requirements of any accrediting body (e.g. AASW-MSW)
   c) Number of available placements at individual locations.
   d) Student preferences as indicated on the submitted form.
   e) A student's previous clinical/practicum location (if relevant).
   f) Special consideration as detailed in 5.2 below, details of which must be submitted at the same time as the preference form.
5.2 Special consideration may include (in respect of the student):
   a) Major health problem(s) requiring frequent and ongoing specialised treatment which is only available in certain locations.
   b) Being a parent of a dependent child or children.
   c) Involvement in sport or music at an elite level (state or national).
   d) Being a primary or secondary carer for a dependent.
5.3 Examples of circumstances concerning the student that are not classed as special consideration:
   a) Lack of access to a motor vehicle or inability to drive.
   b) Other transportation issues.
   c) Relationships without dependents.
   d) Ownership or rental of accommodation.
   e) Other accommodation issues.
   f) Employment.
   g) Financial issues.