



School of Veterinary Medicine: Work Placements Information Sheet

1. Background

Students studying Veterinary Science at Murdoch University are required to undertake work placements as part of their studies. Work placements in veterinary education are a vital experiential component designed to develop confident and capable veterinarians. It is essential for preparing veterinary students for successful careers by providing diverse, real-world experiences and professional development opportunities.

2. What is the purpose of a Work Placement Program in a veterinary workplace?

- The purposes of the work placement program include Students:
 - (i) applying and communicating knowledge in a workplace setting;
 - (ii) developing skills relevant to workplace, including communication skills and planning;
 - (iii) working as an effective team member; and
 - (iv) using professional conduct and acting with integrity.
- The following, additional learning objectives are relevant for Students undertaking a Placement in a veterinary workplace:
 - (i) approaching and handling animals safely and confidently; and
 - (ii) gaining exposure to the spectrum of veterinary care through a variety of veterinary practices or clinical settings, as well as exposure to a range of career paths.
- The work placement program also allows the Host to learn about Murdoch and its teaching programs; it is expected to provide a two-way flow of information and foster relationships between Murdoch and the Host.

3. Student Backgrounds

General

- Murdoch will provide Students with some rudimentary training in basic workplace safety before they undertake a Placement.
- Murdoch will provide Students with some training in animal handling before they undertake a Placement.
- The Host should assume that Students may have limited animal handling experience.
- Students come from a wide range of backgrounds. While all Students have passed exams to demonstrate English competency, some Students do not speak English as their first language. This should be considered when providing safety instruction or training.

Additional – for Rural Placements and Large Animal Placements

Most Students do not have a farming background. The Host should assume that Students:

- have very limited to no previous experience on farms or in agricultural workplaces;
- have no previous experience operating agricultural equipment or machinery; and

- have no experience driving off-road (regardless of whether the Student has a driver's licence).

Additional – for Placements located outside the metropolitan area

The Host should assume that Students have no experience driving long distances, or in areas outside the metropolitan area, or off-road driving (regardless of whether the Student has a driver's licence).

4. Setting up Placements

As part of agreeing and setting up individual Placements with the Host, the Host will advise Murdoch of key aspects and requirements of those Placements, including:

- personal protective equipment to be provided by the Student (and the Host will also confirm this with the Student); and
- in the case of rural placements only:
 - (i) requirement for driver's licence;
 - (ii) whether there is mobile internet and phone coverage available;
 - (iii) distance from the nearest town;
 - (iv) any vaccination requirements for Students (e.g. Q fever); and
 - (v) issues that should be considered for inexperienced drivers travelling to the Placement site or as part of Placement activities, including unsealed roads or offroad driving.

5. Workplace Activities

Students should be provided with an opportunity to participate in workplace and community activities where this is safe to do so and contributes to the goals of the Placement.

6. Student Conduct

- Murdoch expects its Students to respect reasonable requests of the Host, extend courtesy as a guest of the Host and be a good ambassador for Murdoch.
- Students are expected to demonstrate professional conduct, including clear communication and being punctual, respectful, courteous and keen to learn.
- Murdoch is pleased to report that there have been few problems with the conduct of Students on Placement. If any matter of concern does arise with respect to Student conduct, please contact the Work Integrated Learning Team as soon as possible; contact details are provided below.

7. Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment

- Murdoch takes bullying, discrimination and harassment (including racism and sexual harassment) and sexual assault seriously. All Students are advised of the expectations on them and their behaviour in relation to this, including how to seek support if they experience or witness these behaviours. Likewise, Murdoch will support the Host in addressing any inappropriate Student behaviours in this context.
- Murdoch acknowledges that bullying and harassment does not include where the Host gives reasonable and respectful explanation of expectations, assignment of work tasks or feedback on performance.

8. **Safe Farms Australia**

Murdoch partners with *Safe Farms Australia* to provide Students with basic workplace safety training relevant to agricultural work environments prior to undertaking Placements.

9. **Murdoch University Contacts**

Work Integrated Learning Team

- svmplacements@murdoch.edu.au
- Phone: (08) 9360 1515

Murdoch University Incident Reporting (available after hours)

- Phone: (08) 9360 7333