Murdoch University
Work Placements Information Sheet
Wildlife and Animal Care Work Placements

1. Background

- Murdoch University students are eligible to undertake work placements as part of their studies.
- The Bachelor of Agricultural Science is a three-year degree that will prepare graduates for a career in agriculture. Students can select one or two majors that allow them to develop specialised knowledge animal science, animal health or crop and pasture. Students are provided with the option to acquire workplace experience as part of their degree.
- 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 are the Objectives of the Work Placement Program?

- The objectives 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 act with integrity.
- The following learning objectives are relevant for Students undertaking a Placement on a farm, livestock, veterinary, wildlife or animal care workplace:
  - (i) approaching and handling animals safely and confidently; and
  - (ii) describing and evaluating the need for the common animal husbandry procedures.
- 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

- Most Students do not have a background working with animals.
- Murdoch will provide Students with some rudimentary training in basic farm/workplace safety and livestock animal handling before they undertake a Placement.
- The Host should assume that Students:
  - (i) have very limited animal handling experience;
  - (ii) have no previous experience on farms or in agricultural workplaces;
  - (iii) have no experience handling domestic animals or wildlife;

(iv) have no previous experience operating equipment or machinery; and

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

- 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.

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:

- background qualification or training required;
- personal protective equipment that is provided by the host, and any items that are required to be provided by the Student (and the Host will also confirm this with the Student);
- any vaccination requirements for Students (e.g. Q fever);
- any biosecuririty requirements or restrictions;
- if contact with bats is likely (note that Murdoch has advised Students that they should not handle or contact bats without further risk assessment);
- requirement for driver's licence;
- requirement for skills (for example, horse riding);
- the need to operate quad bikes (note that Murdoch has advised Students that, where possible, they should not ride quad bikes, and they should not schedule/attend Placements where quad bikes are the only form of transportation if they are not confident in operation of a quad bike);
- whether there is mobile internet and phone coverage available;
- distance from the nearest town;
- whether accommodation is provided, and if so the nature of the accommodation;
- whether meals are provided, and if so the ability to accommodate different dietary needs (and the Host will also confirm this with the Student);
- for Placements where accommodation is provided, any important information that might impact the safety and wellbeing of Students including the extent that the facilities and rooms are shared with other staff or visitors; and
- 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.
- While Murdoch appreciate that day-to-day management of businesses and agricultural enterprises includes a broad range of activities, Students should not be tasked with completing personal tasks not related to the goals of the Placement. Examples of tasks that could be considered unsuitable includes washing personal cars, weeding personal gardens, or cleaning other people's personal spaces (i.e. bedrooms).
- However, Murdoch does expect Students to contribute to the smooth running of the workplace, for example washing down work vehicles, weed control in animal housing area, or helping to clean the kitchen and/or any other communal spaces they use.

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, being punctual, respectful, courteous and keen to learn.
- Murdoch is pleased to report that there have been few problems with 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. Safe Farms Australia

- Murdoch partners with *Safe Farms WA* to provide Students with basic workplace safety training prior to undertaking Placements.
- Safe Farms WA has information and resources available regarding health and safety in agricultural workplaces which may be of use to the Host.

8. 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.

9. Accommodation and Meals

- The Host may agree to provide accommodation (full board) for Students on Placement.
- Where accommodation is provided, the minimum requirements are:
  - (i) privacy in bathrooms including lockable door, plus curtains on transparent windows or non-transparent (frosted) windows;
  - (ii) enclosed bedrooms;
  - (iii) clean mattresses and bedding (or advise Student if they need to provide their own bedding); and
  - (iv) clean living area clear of anything which may affect standard hygienic living conditions; this includes free of cockroaches, rodents, animal litter within the Student bedroom, bathroom and common living areas.

  Murdoch must be advised if the bedroom will be shared with another Student, staff member or visitor. If shared sleeping areas are provided, these must be same-sex rooms. Mattresses on floors in shared bedrooms are not acceptable.
- Where the Host supplies accommodation and all meals to Students, Murdoch may provide payment as a contribution towards the associated cost. These meals should be sufficient (3 meals per day), fresh and meet any specified dietary requirements. The contribution payment amount will be confirmed by Murdoch when booking the placement.
- The Host will ensure that workplace safety practices (including those related to harassment and discrimination) extend to provided accommodation.
- If there are any changes to accommodation arrangements, the Host must advise Murdoch as soon as possible.

- The arrangement for accommodation and meals must be confirmed by the Host with the Student in advance of the Placement. This includes:
  - (i) where the Student will be staying for the duration of the Placement;
  - (ii) if the Student is required to provide bedding; and
  - (iii) if the Student is required to provide food or meals.

10. Murdoch University Contacts

Work Integrated Learning Team

- Placements for veterinary science students: EFEBooking@murdoch.edu.au
- Placements for Agricultural Science students: agscienceplacements@murdoch.edu.au
- Phone: (08) 9360 1515

Murdoch University Incident Reporting (available after hours)

- Phone: (08) 9360 7333