

Whitley College's NEXT Course is focused upon developing the faith of emerging and young adults through theological and biblical exploration, cultural discernment, purposeful living and justice seeking opportunities. Some of our students are also seeking to integrate into their experience a practical, hands-on placement, internship or missional opportunity.

WHAT IS A NEXT PLACEMENT?

A NEXT placement offers students an action-reflection development opportunity through a coordinated relationship between NEXT and you, the partner organisation. Through this partnership, students learn and grow through the provision of:

- A clearly defined, hands-on, **meaningful project or task** that the student(s) are able to participate in or take responsibility for
- **Active supervision** and support in the placement setting focusing on both project-competence and discipleship/character matters
- Regular **class-based discussion** and reflection at NEXT
- **Coordination and interaction** between NEXT and placement provider staff to ensure student support and good ministry/missional outcomes
- **Assessment work** (such as reflection reports and work journals) administered by NEXT

WHAT DOES A PLACEMENT LOOK LIKE?

In reality, a placement may take many forms, but would probably fall into one of two categories:

- **A weekly commitment** where interns assist running a program or ministry on a regular basis – for example leading within a youth ministry team or helping with a community-based drop-in centre.
- **A project-based commitment** where interns contribute to the achievement of a particular project or series of projects which result in varying time commitments across the course of the year – for example assisting a team delivery a conference or series of camps.

Regardless of the form, at the heart of the best placements is **a clearly defined, hands-on, meaningful project or task for which intern(s) are empowered to take responsibility.**

Placements commence as early in the year as possible and run for the remainder of the academic year.

NEXT @ a Glance

Whitley College's NEXT Diploma Course is focused upon developing the faith of emerging and young adults by partnering with churches and other agencies.

NEXT grows the faith of young people through theological and biblical exploration, cultural discernment, purposeful living and justice seeking opportunities.

- ▶ earn a diploma in theology
- ▶ explore spirituality, identity & theology
- ▶ choose electives in justice, creative arts, & biblical studies
- ▶ integrate with an internship or missional placement
- ▶ grow through spiritual retreats, faith practices & personal mentoring

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE:

There are many purposes in mind, but three specifically to keep in mind are:

First and foremost, this is about the student's **discipleship and character formation**. Yes, placements are always about participating with God as He establishes his reign on earth, but you are probably aware of the ways this has unfortunately been used as an excuse for an intern to do photocopying and various other menial tasks. It is important that we keep the formation of the student in view and consider what experiences, projects and tasks can best serve this end.

The second purpose is for the student to have the opportunity to **develop some specific skills** and competence in whatever area they are serving.

And thirdly, that students will be encouraged to establish **practices of ongoing-learning, self-awareness** and theological insight as they reflect upon their experiences.

The placement experience will also contribute towards the NEXT student's Diploma in Theology. The specific learning outcomes that will be assessed for this unit include:

- 1) Reflect theologically on their cultural and contextual setting;
- 2) Engage in a mission, ministry, community or marketplace setting reflecting the skills and standards of ethical practice required;
- 3) Plan, implement and evaluate one new activity that reflects integration of theoretical and practical learning;
- 4) Engage in supervisory relationships.

WHAT DOES A PLACEMENT REQUIRE OF AN ORGANISATION?

A Placement Provider is expected to provide

- a **safe and supportive environment** where a student can learn through their experiences of being actively involved in meaningful tasks
- a **supervisor** who takes an active role in the students development by attending to their experiences in placement and through regular one-one-one meetings. The supervisor is also expected to give attention to the small amount of administration that accompanies a placement, including establishing the placement through the NEXT Placement Agreement Form, mid and end of placement review forms.
- **availability** to liaise with the NEXT placement coordinator where necessary

(Further details outlining the specific tasks of supervision are described below)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As a placement provider, you can expect students to meet the following responsibilities:

1. Exercise initiative so as to experience a full range of learning opportunities available at the agency;
2. Behave in a professional manner with regard to: (1) punctuality, dress, respect for staff and clients, (2) carrying out agency policy, (3) resolution of conflicts and disputes, (4) the ethical guidelines of utilised by the placement and any other relevant codes of practice;
3. To report their activities to their supervisor and to ensure that their supervisor is truthfully informed about such activities.
4. To follow the instructions and advice provided by their supervisor with respect to youth work practice within the placement setting.
5. Engage in self-assessment and to cheerfully receive constructive feedback from agency staff;
6. To be familiar with and comply with the policies and practices of the placement centre or agency and complaints and grievances process of the College. Failure to do so may result in a formal report to the College Principal via the unit coordinator.
7. Conclude the placement in appropriate ways with clients, field supervisor and other agency staff;
8. Evaluate placement experience and identify future needed learning experiences.

SUPERVISION:

A key component of any placement will be active supervision – both from within the placement setting and within the College. Whitley College follows a two tier supervision model whereby supervision is a shared task carried out by Whitley College (NEXT) teaching staff and appropriately experienced individuals within placement agencies.

Tier 1 – Placement Supervision

Placement providers are expected to provide a supportive and supervised environment including an identified supervisor who meets regularly with the student. The supervisor will be expected to be able to participate in the following process:

1. Meet with the student, outline the opportunities the placement will offer their learning and assess their suitability for the placement on offer. At the conclusion of this process, assist the student to complete the NEXT Placement Agreement Form which will outline the parameters of the placement and the learning opportunities it entails. Further details are provided below.

2. Provide the student with a complete induction process making sure the student is aware of the appropriate policies, OH&S regulations, ethical considerations of the organisation etc
3. Be available to observe the student's work and provide practical feedback;
4. Provide at least fortnightly supervision to assist the students reflective practice and development
5. Liaise with the NEXT Placement Coordinator as necessary throughout the placements duration
6. Be open to the student's feedback;
7. Notify the student and confer with the NEXT Coordinator at Whitley College promptly, if the student's activities or progress is considered to be unsatisfactory
8. Prepare student evaluation upon completion of the placement and provide feedback on Whitley's youth field education program

Tier 2 - Group Supervision Conducted by Whitley College (NEXT) Staff

Tier Two supervision provides students with a safe open-learning environment, an opportunity to learn from teacher input and to discuss their experiences with each other, to share ideas, pursue questions, and create a collegiate consultative learning environment. Encouragement and support are important, as well as challenging and stretching the student in his/her development.

Supervision provided by NEXT includes:

1. Liaising with agencies and placement supervisors
2. Checking the progress of each placement with respect to the student's workplace relationships, nature and degree of work, student satisfaction, and any difficulties experienced by the student;
3. Providing an open forum for discussing the activities they are undertaking, skill development, challenges or opportunities individual students may be facing;
4. Monitoring student awareness and adherence to ethical issues and facilitate general discussion regarding legally ambiguous or ethical issues connected with their placement
5. Ensuring administrative requirements related to the placement.

ETHICAL PROCEDURES

It is the student's responsibility to conduct himself/herself according to the professional standards of the agency in regard to all aspects placement and especially with respect to any contact with clients. Issues relating to the unsatisfactory progress, complaints or concerns of a student must be reported by the Field Supervisor to the NEXT Coordinator promptly.

REPORTING UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS OR ISSUES OF CONCERN

The College welcomes open lines of communication between Field Supervisors, students and College Staff. Issues relating to the unsatisfactory progress of a student, or complaints or concerns regarding a student must be reported by the Field Supervisor to the Unit Coordinator promptly. Any corrective action, considered or implemented, shall take into account the following considerations: -

- Firstly, the welfare of clients involved;
- Secondly, the Field Supervisor's primary obligation to serve the interests of the placement centre/agency, without prejudice; and
- Thirdly, the training needs of the student.

The College's risk management procedures require the Principal to be informed of issues, which place the College at risk, particularly the risk of litigation. The procedures also require the Principal to report potential risks to the College's legal advisors and insurers.

Therefore, Field Supervisors shall be required to: -

- Report, in writing, to the NEXT coordinator, any instance in which a student refuses to comply with directions or instructions given by the Supervisor. The Supervisor must first warn the student that refusal to comply may result in suspension from the course of study related to the placement.
- Report, in writing, to the NEXT coordinator any instance in which a student is deemed to be an "unsafe practitioner", and the reasons for that assessment. The Supervisor must first warn the student that persistent failure or refusal to implement safe practices may result in suspension from the course of study.
- Report, in writing, to the unit coordinator, any instance in which a student refuses to comply with the policies and practices of the placement centre or agency or the complaints and grievances processes of the College (if they have been activated). The Supervisor must first warn the student that refusal to comply may result in suspension from the course of study.

On receipt of any such report, it shall be the responsibility of the unit coordinator to bring the report to the attention of the College Principal. The College Principal shall, if necessary, seek the advice of the College's legal advisors and/or insurers and shall have the prerogative to suspend the student from continuing his/her practicum until the issue is resolved.

Police Security Check: All students are required to provide a current police check prior to commencement of their placement, and indicate any outstanding legal issues or criminal activity. All students working with children aged 18 years or under will be required to undergo a Working With Children check form in addition to their police check. Students are also required to indicate any upheld, or pending, complaints related to any relevant aspect of their self prior to commencement of a placement.

Insurance Cover: All students working in agencies to fulfil the course requirements of DP0155W Reflective Practice are covered by Whitley College's insurance policies against any legal liabilities they may incur as a result of misconduct or professional malpractice. This insurance extends to protect agencies from legal liabilities that may be incurred as a result of providing an opportunity for supervised youth work experience to Whitley students doing DP0155W Reflective Practice, where the placement has been approved by the unit coordinator.

Finally, we wish to thank you again for taking the time to consider providing a placement for our NEXT students. We look forward to an ongoing relationship and partnership with your organisation. If you have any questions or queries, please feel free to contact us for further information.

Yours Sincerely



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