

# Tertiary Student Placements and Projects

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*A guide to student placements and  
projects in community organisations*

*Revised 2007  
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## **Introduction**

Every year, hundreds of students around the Waikato from many different disciplines complete practical projects and spend time in a wide range of organisations as a part of their course requirements.

These placements/projects have generally been of great benefit to the students, providing the opportunity for students to complete a practical piece of work and gain valuable work experience, and to learn about the value of the community sector in our society.

Placements and projects also benefit community organisations, by providing the opportunity to have a key piece of work or a project completed from a fresh perspective. Sometimes students bring with them skills not available within particular community organisations. They also assist with training future workers in the sector, and with building relationships between community organisations and education providers.

This resource provides a description of student placements/projects that make up a component of course requirements in programmes offered by the following institutions:

- The University of Waikato
- Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec)
- Te Wananga O Aotearoa

Information from other institutions will be included in future editions of this resource, as the information becomes available. If you would like to discuss being included contact:

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Social Services Waikato  
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Programmes included in this resource range from management studies to psychology, media arts and information technology.

Placement and project examples include:

- Marketing plans
- Website development
- Public relations projects
- Strategic plans
- Counselling placements
- Social work placements
- Health promotion evaluations
- Information technology projects
- Human resources plans
- Literature reviews
- Media design projects
- Needs assessments

**So you think you might like to host a student placement? Here are some things to consider about student placements and projects:**

Although the student may be managed by a specific staff person, the Chief Executive or Manager of the organisation is ultimately responsible for the student.

It's a good idea to begin by talking with the tertiary institution's course coordinator about the possible placement. The coordinator will be able to clarify the length of time for the placement, the expected outcomes and whether your project is appropriate. You might like to talk to people in other community organisations about their experiences of hosting students. Some community organisations have also found it useful to speak with classes of students about what their organisation does and possible placement opportunities.

### **What are the responsibilities of the organisation?**

- Health and Safety requirements?
- Supervision requirements?
- Workspace, desk, computer, phone, stationery?

### **What privacy issues could there be?**

- What access to databases, documentation or in-house discussions will the student require?
- What is appropriate for the student to have access to?
- Ensure you define what is appropriate, what can be used with permission and what is confidential

### **In addition:**

Be sure you can articulate clear boundaries. For example is attendance at staff meetings appropriate? Some of the time, all of the time etc, how will it be managed? Ensure you understand why student is there, and what they need from your organisation. Ensure you can provide what they require before undertaking or agreeing to the placement

### **What does a host organisation have to do?**

As the host organisation you will usually need to provide the opportunity for a student to observe and contribute to your organisation. Some placements are more in-depth and require that the student completes a set number of practical hours working directly with clients or on specific projects. It can be useful to go through an interview process with students, just as you would for a prospective employee. This allows the organisation to determine whether the student would be a 'good fit' within the organisation. It provides an opportunity to find out things such as how much experience they have in the sector, about any criminal convictions they may have, what values they hold and so forth.

Some placements also require that the host organisation provides feedback and completes reports on the student's performance. It's a good idea to clarify what

the course coordinator expects from the host organisation and how they will support the organisation through the placement. Find out what the student's educational requirements are and what this actually mean to the organisation or supervisor/manager by way of commitments, i.e. reports, supervision, attendance at meetings or gradings and so on. In addition clarify with the course coordinator how the tertiary institution will manage potential risks, including whether the student is covered by insurance through the tertiary institution or the host organisation.

### **Are there costs involved?**

Financial aspects are negotiated between the host organisation and the student. Organisations generally agree to at least cover the student's expenses, e.g. travel, printing/photocopying. Some organisations agree a rate of pay or financial reward for the work undertaken. There is no requirement for a host organisation to make a major financial contribution; the most important commitment is to provide the student with practical experience and quality supervision.

### **What is the benefit to an organisation of providing positions for student placements?**

Placements have the potential to bring:

- The input of fresh ideas and enthusiasm and innovative thinking
- The benefit of new knowledge
- Specialised skills
- Young people into the sector
- Relationship building with tertiary institutions and various disciplines, i.e. social work, psychology, sociology, business management, information technology, marketing, counselling, law etc
- Free or very affordable project delivery
- High standards of work (the students are being marked on their work by their institution)

### **Arranging supervision or management**

Placements and projects generally require that an appropriate person within the organisation commits to being the student's placement supervisor or manager. Depending on the placement, this commitment can be fairly significant.

Supervision can include communicating regularly, mentoring, reviewing reports and evaluating student performance. Many placements require that the student develops a formal agreement with the host organisation which identifies expectations, duties to be completed, the time period, the supervisor, on-site dates, salary terms (if any), reimbursement/payment for expenses incurred (if any), etc.

Some placements (e.g. counselling and social work) require that the student has a placement supervisor who is responsible for the student's role within the organisation, and a qualified, external supervisor.

### **When the student arrives**

- Think carefully about what the student will need to know about the organisation before he or she begins.
- An orientation session will make the student feel welcome. Make sure the student is introduced to other staff, is shown where to make a cup of tea, where the toilets are, how to use the phones and so on.
- Provide a copy of the organisations policies, protocols, values and vision to enable the student to get a feel for the ethos of the organisation.
- If the student is working with clients (e.g. counselling or social work placements) ensure that a confidentiality agreement is signed to protect the people they are working with.
- Some agencies will also require that the student undergoes a police check before the placement commences.

### **During the placement**

The placement supervisor should give regular and constructive feedback. It is useful if this is arranged at a regular time. Careful monitoring of the student's work may be required if the placement includes direct client contact.

### **When the placement is ending**

Give the student constructive feedback. Show them how the project has been useful for the organisation. Ask the student for feedback about how the placement or project has been for them.

### **What are the responsibilities of the student?**

What sorts of things may the student need to think about or do as part of the placement arrangements?

- Ensure the organisation/placement supervisor has the necessary documentation outlining your expectations and the responsibilities required of them. i.e. what are they undertaking in agreeing to provide you with a placement position
- Ensure the placement organisation and your supervisor/manager clearly understand why you are there, and what you need to achieve/gain from this placement
- Provide the organisation with a written introduction about yourself. Include who you are, give a brief precis of your background, knowledge and values, and a summary of what you want to gain from and bring to this organisation. Include with this contact numbers, including an emergency personal contact person.
- Ensure the organisation has your tertiary contacts and a personal contact in case of emergency, and your tertiary supervisor has your organisational contacts
- Take responsibility for your own learning needs, for example by organising supervision, asking for assistance or explanation when needed, clarifying the course requirements of your learning institute to the organisation

- and/or supervisor and by ensuring there is effective liaison opportunities available between your educational institute and placement workplace
- Maintain open channels of communication between the organisation and/or supervisor or manager and yourself– speak up if you have concerns or need more input etc
  - Maintain organisational privacy and confidentiality
  - Work within set boundaries

**As a student, be clear about what you require. Why are you doing this placement? Why did you approach this particular organisation for a placement?**

- Ultimately you need to pass your academic qualification requirements
- You may require varying levels of professional and/or personal support during this placement
- You want practical experience in this area
- You want to gain network opportunities

**Other considerations - When good placements go bad!**

It is important to note that not all placements and projects will be entirely successful or positive experiences, either for the student or for the organisation.

Common problems include:

- Lack of clarified expectations between student and supervisor
- The needs of the student conflict with the needs of the organisation
- Lack of support by supervisor
- Project too large or too small to be completed in set time period
- Unclear communication between the tertiary institution and the host organisation

If you have any concerns about a placement, talk to the student and the course coordinator sooner rather than later. The issue may be easily dealt with.

In addition to working with a host organisation, it is also important to remember that the student will need to complete the course work required of them by their

lecturer or tutor. Effectively students will be dealing with two sets of expectations.

With clear guidelines and some planning in the beginning stages of the placement, most experiences are a rewarding and positive for students and host organisations.

## **Develop a placement agreement or memorandum of understanding**

### **Here is an example.**

#### **This is the placement agreement between**

- *Student (name)*
- *Tertiary supervisor (name)(tertiary institution)*
- *Placement workplace supervisor (name) (organisation)*

#### **Purpose**

- a) This agreement refers to the placement of *name* to be undertaken with *name of organisation*
- b) The placement is part of the requirement for *degree/course*
- c) The purpose of the placement is to provide *name* with a period of supervised practice during which *name* will be able to integrate theory and practice and prepare for *degree*

#### **Term**

- a) The placement shall run for a period of...
- b) The start date of the placement will be...
- c) The finish date of the placement will be...
- d) The student will complete ... hours at *name of organisation* for this placement

#### **Agreement**

*Name*, placement student, agrees to provide documentation as agreed (*possible examples*)

- *The project undertaken for the placement organisation*
- *Feedback with regard to their placement experiences*

*Name*, Workplace supervisor, agrees to provide the following support (*possible examples*)

- *Weekly supervision*
- *Meetings with tertiary institution*
- *One page report*
- *Sign off on satisfactory completion*

#### **Supervision**

Placement supervision will focus primarily on matters relating to *name* obligations as a placement student

#### **Access to and use of work-based information for placement purposes**

- a) *Name* will complete reports on *her/his* experiences at *organisation*.  
Dependent on content and issues discussed these reports will be submitted in the first instance to your workplace supervisor for comment unless otherwise agreed
- b) It is recognised that some information included in the placement reports may be of a sensitive nature. All material will be treated as confidential and will be made available only to tertiary institution supervisors (or

- examiners/ lecturers) for the purposes of reviewing *names* progress and examination unless specifically agreed otherwise
- c) *Name* undertakes to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of anything disclosed about *organisation* and clients, customers and or organisations worked with by said organisation

**Dispute resolution**

- a) If any dispute arises out of this agreement the parties shall resolve the dispute to their mutual satisfaction by way of negotiation, such negotiation to be conducted with honesty and integrity
- b) If any dispute is unable to be resolved by mutual satisfaction of the parties, it shall be referred to a mediator agreed to by the parties

- Signed *Student (name)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- *Tertiary Supervisor (name)*  
*(Tertiary Institution)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- *Placement workplace supervisor (name)*  
*(organisation)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

## *Waikato Management School, Communication*

### **Course title**

A communication investigation in the workplace (MCOM399B)

### **Placement/project description**

Students are required to investigate a communication issue in an organisation

- Communication and ICTs
- PR communication with external publics
- Internal communication issues

### **Placement/project timeframe**

A Semester: March/April – placement and proposal for investigation (MCOM 398A) (4 months approx)

B Semester: July-November – investigation (MCOM 399B)

### **Contact**

Mary Simpson

Ph 838 4466 ext 8357

[mary@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:mary@waikato.ac.nz)

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## *Waikato Management School, Management Studies*

### **Course title**

A report of an investigation (499)

### **Placement/project description**

Students research a management problem within an organisation

- Public relations campaign for a charitable organisation
- Review of effectiveness of a staff initiative
- Market research project for a new product
- Business plan for a new organisation

Organisations can advertise their project online [www.mngt.waikato.ac.nz/499](http://www.mngt.waikato.ac.nz/499) or complete a Potential 499 Project form available from

Joyce Amarasekera

499 Office

Management Student Centre

University of Waikato

Private Bag 3105 Hamilton

### **Placement/project timeframe**

Register interest at any time during the year. Projects take approximately 6 months to complete

## **Contacts**

Contact appropriate department coordinators:

- Accounting Dr Alan Lowe [alowe@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:alowe@waikato.ac.nz)
  - Economics Mrs Bridget Daldy [bdaldy@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:bdaldy@waikato.ac.nz)
  - Finance Dr Ed Vos [evos@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:evos@waikato.ac.nz)
  - Management communication Ms Nittaya Campbell [nittaya@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:nittaya@waikato.ac.nz)
  - Management systems Dr Chuda Basnet [chuda@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:chuda@waikato.ac.nz)
  - Marketing & International management Assoc. Prof Roger Brooksbank  
rogerb@waikato.ac.nz
  - Strategic management & leadership Mr John Gilbert [jgilbert@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:jgilbert@waikato.ac.nz)
  - Human resource management Mr John Gilbert [jgilbert@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:jgilbert@waikato.ac.nz)
  - Management tourism Mr Charlie Panakera [csp@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:csp@waikato.ac.nz)
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## ***Waikato Management School***

### **BECOM students' work experience placements.**

Do you have an IT project that staff in your organisation lack the skills or the time to tackle? University of Waikato electronic commerce students could be the answer. They need sponsors for work experience placements as part of their BECOM degree.

Ecommerce students usually begin their work experience during their summer break (that is from October/November to February). They require a minimum four weeks on-site placement.

For more details see [www.mngt.waikato.ac.nz/projects](http://www.mngt.waikato.ac.nz/projects) or contact the Student Management Centre, Waikato Management School, email [projects@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:projects@waikato.ac.nz) or ph (07) 838 4303.

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## ***Community Psychology Programme***

### **Course title**

Evaluation Research (PSYC.510)

### **Placement/project description**

Group project in which graduate students complete an evaluation of a community-based programme or a needs assessment. Recent projects have included evaluations of programmes for carers of whanau members with disabilities, an ante-natal education programme, a prevention of hearing loss programme for preschoolers and a peer support programme in a secondary school.

### **Special considerations:**

Projects are more attractive if students costs can be covered

**Placement/project timeframe**

Registers interest by March, evaluations conducted June to October

**Contact**

Dr Neville Robertson  
University of Waikato  
Phone 07 838 4466 ext 8300  
Email [scorpio@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:scorpio@waikato.ac.nz)

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***Community Psychology Programme*****Course title**

Thesis (PSYC.594)

**Placement/project timeframe**

Students work full-time for an academic year on a research project. Wide range of evaluations and needs assessments have been undertaken through the programme.

**Special considerations:**

Considering the experience of graduate students, some remuneration is not unreasonable.

**Placement/project timeframe**

Start date varies. Most students begin early in the year. Duration 40 weeks.

**Contact**

Dr Neville Robertson  
University of Waikato  
Phone 07 838 4466 ext 8300  
Email [scorpio@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:scorpio@waikato.ac.nz)

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***Community Psychology Programme*****Course title**

Community Placements (PSYC712)

**Placement/project description**

Students undertake two 10-day placements, with different organisations. Placements have included evaluability assessments, small needs assessments, literature reviews and preparation of evaluation plans

**Placement/project timeframe**

Register interest by March. Placements take place from March to September.

**Contact**

Bridgette Masters  
University of Waikato  
Phone 07 838 4466 ext 8298  
Email [bridge@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:bridge@waikato.ac.nz)

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***School of Education******Course title***

Master of Counselling

**Placement/project description**

Practicum placement for counselling students. Working in schools, community agencies, mental health services, church agencies

**Special considerations:**

Groups need to provide supervision. The programme operates from a social constructivist theory and narrative practice base. Students come from all over the North Island

**Placement/project timeframe**

Full year – from February to November. Groups need to register by February

**Contact**

Kathie Crockett  
07 856 8462 ext 4500  
[kcrocket@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:kcrocket@waikato.ac.nz)

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**WAIKATO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY****Management Studies****Course title**

Marketing Planning and Control, Marketing Research, Buyer Behaviour and Communication Strategies

**Placement/project description**

Students complete a group project that is part of the course requirement. Students have to carry out an analysis and produce plans and recommendations in a marketing context. An example of a project carried out with a community organisation is the development of a marketing plan for Red Cross, Hamilton.

### Special considerations

Tutors may visit the organisation to check on student progress. Reports will be provided for the organisation

### **Placement/project timeframe**

Placements are over a 14 week period, where students visit with the organisation at least three times. Placements occur mid February to the end of May and mid July to end of October . Register interest by early February and early July.

### **Contact**

Deniss Yeung  
Phone 834 8888 ext 8537  
Email [codcy@wintec.ac.nz](mailto:codcy@wintec.ac.nz)

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## ***Business Studies and Office Technology***

### **Course title**

Certificate in Business Administration & Computing (level 3)

### **Placement/project description**

Students go into an office for a period of one week (5 days) to experience the office environment and work as if they were employed there. Examples of tasks include word processing, data entry, reception, telephone, general office duties

### Special considerations:

Students should experience as wide a range of office tasks as possible

### **Placement/project timeframe**

Placements occur in the last week of June and the last week of November. For a June placement register interest by May 1. For a November placement register interest by August 1.

### **Contact**

Joanne James  
Phone 07 834 8800 ext 8679  
Email [joanne.james@wintec.ac.nz](mailto:joanne.james@wintec.ac.nz)

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## ***Information Technology***

### **Course title**

Bachelor of Information Technology

### **Placement/project description**

Students complete a 400 hour IT project. Examples of projects have included developing websites, databases, promotional CD Roms, and development of software for specific needs

### **Placement/project timeframe**

Projects take place in the second semester – July – November. Register interest from February to June.

### **Contact**

Bruce Ferguson  
Waikato Institute of Technology  
Phone 07 834 8800 ext 8630  
Email [bruce.ferguson@wintec.ac.nz](mailto:bruce.ferguson@wintec.ac.nz)

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## ***Media Arts Programme***

### **Course title**

Internship

### **Placement/project description**

Students undertake a 120 hour placement that suits the learner and place of employment in the field of Media Arts. Placements in the past have included web designing, photography, PR/advertising, journalism, designing.

### **Special considerations:**

Students, employers and internship directors complete a learning contract

### **Placement/project timeframe**

Prefer that interest is registered from Jan/May. Placements occur during the academic year from Feb to Oct. Placement length 120 hours

### **Contact**

David Cook

## ***Media Arts Programme***

### **Course title**

Professional research contract

Students complete a collaborative project with a professional entity. Students use fresh ideas and techniques for a professional setting.

### **Placement/project description**

Projects are for 100 hours and have included websites, brochure design, publications and event management.

### **Special considerations:**

Students are expected to undertake a reasonable amount of research, manage time and a project and conduct client liaison.

### **Placement/project timeframe**

Register interest from January through to June. Projects completed July to October. Placement length 100 hours

### **Contact**

School of Media Arts  
Waikato Institute of Technology  
Ph 07 834 8800

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## **TE WANANGA O AOTEAROA**

### ***The Diploma of Social Work***

#### **Placement/project:**

There are two formats for this course

- Classroom based- The students are required to complete a placement of 12 weeks in a social services setting in the role of a social worker (or as close as possible to it). A second placement is required in the subsequent year for students (12 weeks) ideally in a statutory body or an organisation with statutory contracts/duties.

- Industry Based-Students are required to work at least 10 hours in the social work industry. A second placement is required within the two years but this can be RPL'd (Recognition of Prior Learning) or a volunteer position in another organisation (this placement has to be different from the incumbent placement i.e. to be classed as another role).

**Placement/Project time frame:**

- Classroom based- the placement is two 12 week periods (or approximately 420 hours). The placements times vary but are usually late July to mid October.
- Industry based-The incumbent placement is for the duration of the course and another placement is either RPL or a volunteer/part time position (420 hours minimum) the second placement can be carried out simultaneously with the incumbent placement.

**Contact Person:**

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