EXTERNSHIP PREFERENCE FORM

GUIDE TO THE EXTERNSHIP PLACEMENT ALLOCATION PROCESS AND SUBMISSION OF PREFERENCES

Please read this guide carefully, complete the attached Externship Preference Form (Form A) and submit the Form to the Clinical Externship Managers, Elissa Morriss and Helen Ross. If you intend to enrol in more than one Externship course, please submit a separate Externship Preference Form for each course.

The Forms may be submitted in hard copy to the Externships Managers office, room 119, McElwain Building or left at Third floor reception of the McElwain Building marked to the attention of the Externship Managers or scanned and emailed to the Externships Manager at clinicalexternships@psy.uq.edu.au

The process of allocating placements is as follows:

1. Students complete the Externship Preference Form and submit to the Externship Managers.

2. The Externships Managers will determine the type of placement to best suit each student based on student preferences and on the nature of clients seen and placement settings of the student’s previous internships and externships. This is to ensure that the student sees a sufficiently broad range of clients, (in age, clinical presentation and other factors), in a variety of settings in order to meet all accreditation requirements and clinical competencies.

3. The Consortium of Brisbane Universities’ (Consortium) will have been advised of which placements are likely to be made available to students. However, it must be remembered that changes can occur year which impact on the availability of these placements, e.g. supervisors’ changing jobs, taking leave etc.

4. The Externship Managers will advise students of their allocated placement and the arrangements required to initiate the placement.

Frequently Asked Questions about Allocation of Placements

Please refer to the Externship Handbook Clinical Psychology (the Handbook) for more detailed information on Externships, including additional FAQs.

What is the Consortium?
The Consortium is a group of Clinical Psychology Program Directors and Clinical Externship Coordinators from Brisbane and nearby universities, The University of Queensland (UQ), Griffith University (Mt Gravatt Campus), the Australian Catholic University, Queensland University of Technology, and the University of Southern Queensland. The Consortium also includes the Program Directors and Externship Managers of the UQ Master of Applied Psychology (Health) and the QUT Educational and Developmental Psychology Programs. The Consortium “pools” the majority of placements available in Brisbane each semester for postgraduate students in clinical psychology and in clinical neuropsychology. This ensures that available placements are distributed equitably among the universities and that potential supervisors are contacted once only (by a Consortium member) each semester to check their availability to provide a student placement.

Why have the Externship Managers not provided a list of potential Externship sites with the Preference Form?
There is no point in sending out a list of potential placement sites to students as firstly, a number of these sites may not be hosting a student in the relevant semester, and secondly, the majority of placements are offered to the Consortium as a whole, not specifically to UQ. Although a placement may be available it may be allocated to another university in the Consortium.
Can I contact supervisors myself and organise my own externship placement?
You must not directly contact potential supervisors, including supervisors employed by the Queensland Department of Health. This could impact negatively on the reputation of the University and the Consortium and also on the supervisor’s willingness to allocate a placement to the Consortium in future. There are a number of issues that need to be taken into consideration as mentioned above. For example, the placement may be in an area where another university has first preference for that placement, another university may be waiting a “turn” for a particular placement; or the supervisor may have already informed the Consortium that they are not available to supervise that semester. Please contact an Externship Manager if you are considering sourcing a placement in another area of Qld, interstate or overseas, as it will be the Externship Manager’s responsibility to advise on how to proceed and whether this would be approved.

What factors do I need to take into account when considering my placement options?
Both the PsyBA and APAC requirements state that students should obtain a broad exposure to clients in their post-graduate clinical training. This includes seeing clients across the full lifespan (e.g. child to older adult), across a range of practice settings (e.g. inpatient, outpatient) and across as full a range of disorders and severity of presentations as possible. A master log book should be kept by the student, in which clients seen can be sorted by age, service setting, and diagnoses, so that students are able to inform their supervisors as well as the Externship Managers of any gaps in client groups that they are wishing to fill. Students with such detailed knowledge are in a better position to obtain the placements which best match their learning needs.

Students who wish to work as a Psychologist in the UK on completion of their D Psych program should note that they must have completed a child placement as part of their program for their qualification to be accepted in Britain.

If I am in the third or a later year of my program (for D Psych students) may I enrol in and commence more than one Externship course in semester 1, eg PSYC8330 and PSYC8340?
UQ has to find a large number of places for students in the clinical program. The priority will be giving each student one placement. For third year DPsych students, it will probably be best to commence the longer placement (PSYC8340) in Semester one, if they have approval from their research supervisor to do so. If there are suitable places left over after all students have been allocated one placement, it may be possible for a DPsych student who has finished and handed in their thesis to also commence PSYC8330 in first semester – typically students will be directed to enrol in Semester 2 but will be able to commence their placement in Semester 1. This has implications for enrollment/withdrawal of enrolment etc so the Externship Managers will communicate with all the second and third year and beyond clinical students about enrolments later in the year. It is expected that more placements will be available in Semester two as the second year students will be concentrating on their thesis.

When am I eligible to enrol in an Externship course?

How do I find out more about Externships?
An Orientation Session for students undertaking externships is offered in October each year. It is strongly recommended that all students enrolling in Externships attend this session, including students who may have already completed an externship. Please refer to part A of this Handbook for detailed information about externships.

Timeframes for commencing and completing Externships
Standard Externships are to be completed in 20-24 weeks, and an Extended Externship in 30-34 weeks. If you are a current Intern and you have not finished your internship requirements you will not be able to commence an Externship. If you are in your third year and intend to complete your two externships and graduate at the end of the year, you must plan ahead, as results are uploaded by mid-November and all work must be completed (including folio submission and marking) by early November. Any requests to alter the duration of an externship must be submitted to the Externship Managers for consideration of your circumstances, prior to any discussion with supervisors.