

PROCEDURE: Client Safety and Clinical / Practicum / Practice Experience / Field Education Courses

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1 Protecting Client Safety and Managing Risk in the Placement Setting

- 1.1 The Faculty Member and/or Onsite Supervisor will assess the Student's skills, competence, and Scope of Practice on an ongoing basis. Such assessment will inform appropriate assignments and level of independence/supervision in the Placement setting.
- 1.2 A Student must be approved by the Faculty Member and/or Onsite Supervisor to perform tasks independently. The form and means of approval (written, verbal, etc.) is determined and specified within each program.
- 1.3 Each Student is expected to be prepared for the Placement in order to provide safe, competent care. Expectations are defined in the course outline and associated documents.
- 1.4 Each Student is responsible for identifying and expressing any concerns about his/her ability to perform assigned duties/tasks, and/or disclosing anything that may interfere with safe practice, and will be encouraged and supported to do so. Students are expected to be honest, even when mistakes have been made, and must report any error or incident to the Onsite Supervisor or Faculty Member immediately.

2 Intervention in Student Practice for Reasons of Safety

- 2.1 In situations where the Onsite Supervisor identifies a safety issue, the Onsite Supervisor will intervene as necessary, and will notify the Faculty Member as soon as possible.
- 2.2 The Faculty Member is responsible for determining the appropriate intervention and response to safety issues in Student practice.

The Faculty Member may select any level of intervention (as outlined in *Policy: Client Safety and Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education Courses*), and may progress to any other level of intervention, based on assessment of the situation and degree of risk; no sequential progression is implied.

2.3 Level 1 intervention

2.3.1 Level 1 intervention may include:

- 2.3.1.1 The Faculty Member or Onsite Supervisor may stop/discontinue the Student from performing the task(s) that poses a safety concern;
- 2.3.1.2 The Faculty Member and/or Onsite Supervisor identifies and discusses with the Student the occurrence/ behavior that reflects a potential for Unsafe Practice.
- 2.3.1.3 *Meeting Notes* will be used to document meetings with the Student and actions taken.
- 2.3.1.4 The Faculty Member and/or Onsite Supervisor may provide remedial instruction to establish correct practice. This may include, but is not limited to: focused questioning, corrective feedback/instruction, coaching, problem-solving, readings, other teaching/learning strategies.
- 2.3.1.5 The Faculty Member will conduct a further assessment of the safety of the Student's practice.
- 2.3.1.6 The Faculty Member may determine further intervention based on the assessment. Refer to *Procedure: Student Progress in Clinical/ Practicum/Practice Experience /Field Education Courses*, which outlines possible interventions.
- 2.3.1.7 A remediation plan may be developed to address the areas of Unsafe Practice, using a *Corrective Learning Plan* or a *Contract for Improvement*, following the steps outlined in *Procedure: Student Progress in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education Courses*.
- 2.3.1.8 The Student is expected to actively engage in the process to understand the potential for Unsafe Practice and to take corrective action to demonstrate positive progress.

2.4 Level 2 intervention

2.4.1 Level 2 intervention may include:

- 2.4.1.1 Temporary removal of the Student from the practice setting (e.g. removal for the remainder of that shift).

The Onsite Supervisor may temporarily remove the Student from the specific practice situation and/or task, and will report to the Faculty Member as soon as possible.
- 2.4.1.2 The Faculty Member will meet with the Student to review the situation and discuss the nature of the Unsafe Practice. This meeting should occur as soon as possible, within one working day following the incident.
- 2.4.1.3 The Faculty Member initiates an assessment of the Student's performance and the safety issue.
- 2.4.1.4 A remediation plan is developed to address the areas of Unsafe Practice, using a *Contract for Improvement*, following the steps outlined in *Procedure: Student Progress in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education Courses*.

- 2.4.1.5 The Faculty Member will monitor and reassess the Student's practice to ensure safe practice is achieved and maintained.
- 2.4.1.6 *Meeting Notes* will be used to document meetings with the Student and actions taken, in addition to documentation in a *Corrective Learning Plan* and/or *Contract for Improvement*.
- 2.4.2 The Program Team Leader and/or Chair will be informed.
- 2.5 Level 3 intervention:
 - 2.5.1 The Faculty Member initiates an immediate removal from placement process whereby the Student is not permitted to attend the Placement until the situation is reviewed and resolved.
 - 2.5.1.1 The Faculty Member will document a detailed written report of the Unsafe Practice case and circumstances, including: the Student's name, alleged facts, description of the unsafe nature of the practice, grounds warranting removal from placement (if applicable), and names and evidence from witnesses (if applicable).
 - 2.5.1.2 The Faculty Member will inform the Program Chair of the situation and action taken. The Level 3 intervention will be reviewed and confirmed by the Chair. Others may be informed at the discretion of the Chair.
 - 2.5.1.3 The Faculty Member will advise the Student that the removal from placement process has been initiated, discuss the incident that led to this action, and provide the Student with information about the process.
 - 2.5.2 The Faculty Member will investigate the situation, gathering information from relevant parties and sources. Based on the information, the Faculty Member will assess the seriousness of the situation, in collaboration with the Chair, Dean, Placement agency, and others, as required, and determine the appropriate action to be taken.
 - 2.5.3 Possible action may include:
 - 2.5.3.1 Development and implementation of a remediation plan to address the area(s) of Unsafe Practice, using a *Contract for Improvement*, following the steps outlined in *Procedure: Student Progress in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education Courses*.
 - 2.5.3.2 Return to Placement with conditions.
 - 2.5.3.3 Fail grade in the course; note that for some programs, a fail grade may lead to withdrawal from the program.
 - 2.5.4 *Meeting Notes* will be used to document meetings with the Student and actions taken.
- 2.6 Failure of the course for reasons of Unsafe Practice
 - 2.6.1 The Faculty Member has determined that the Student is not safe to return to practice. The Faculty Member will document the rationale for a failing grade for the course, detailing the Unsafe Practice, interventions made, results and/or persistence of Unsafe Practice despite intervention, and any other relevant information. The Student's performance and Unsafe Practice should be described in relation to course learning outcomes and practice competencies.

- 2.6.2 The Program Chair reviews the documentation and the process leading to the assignment of a failing grade in the course. Any concerns of the Chair regarding the process will be discussed with the Faculty Member and referred to the Associate Dean.

The Faculty Member and Chair will meet with the Student. The Student may bring a support person if desired.

The following will be discussed:

- Evidence/rationale leading to the decision to assign a failing grade
- Exploration of reasons for the failure
- Inform the Student of the right to appeal
- Discussion of options available to the Student (e.g. alternative program choices; option to repeat the course, if applicable; withdrawal to take time needed to address any issues that may be interfering with performance, etc.)
- Referral to Advising, Counselling, or other services as appropriate.

The meeting will be documented using *Meeting Notes*, signed by all parties.

- 2.6.3 The Program Chair will complete and process the *Student Program Discontinuation Form*, where applicable.

Individual departments may institute and use a “checklist” for implementation, processing, and distribution of the *Student Program Discontinuation Form* to meet the needs of that program.

- 2.6.4 Refer to the VIU Student Conduct Policy and related Procedure where the situation involves a violation of that policy.

3 Documentation

- 3.1 Intervention will be documented using *Meeting Notes*, a *Corrective Learning Plan*, and/or a *Contract for Improvement*, as outlined in *Procedure: Student Progress in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience /Field Education Courses*.

- 3.2 Documents should be read and signed by the Student, recognizing that the Student may refuse to sign. Signatures indicate that the individual has read the document; it does not necessarily indicate that the parties agree, unless agreement is explicitly stated.

If the Student refuses to sign, the document will be placed in the Student file, with a notation that the Student refused to sign and was given a copy of the document, signed by the Faculty Member and Chair.

- 3.3 Individual programs may institute additional procedures and documentation related to Client safety and Student performance, which are specific to that program.

4 Related Policies & References

- VIU incident reporting procedures:
 - Health and Safety Services website: Reporting Injuries/Incidents
<http://sites.viu.ca/healthandsafety/reporting-injuries-incident/>
- VIU policies and procedures regarding Student conduct and performance:
 - Policy 32.05 and Procedure 32.05.001: *Student Conduct Code*

- Policy 32.06 and Procedure 32.06.001: *Student Conduct Appeals*
- Policy 96.01 and Procedure 96.01.001: *Student Academic Code of Conduct*
- Policy 96.02 and Procedure 96.02.001: *Academic Appeals*
- Policy 96.03 and Procedure 96.03.001: *Academic Probation*
- Faculty of Health & Human Services Policy and Procedure: *Student Progress in Clinical/Practicum/Practice Experience/Field Education Courses*
- Student Handbooks for specific programs, which provide program-specific information about Practicum/Clinical/Practice Experience/Field Education courses, expectations of professional conduct, and Student performance.