

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar Ltd

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Advanced Diploma of Rudolf Steiner Education

Course code: NAT10825, CRICOS course code 107755A



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (Practical Placement) HANDBOOK 2025

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1. Structure, dates and rationale of Professional Experience

The Advanced Diploma of Rudolf Steiner Education is specifically targeted at teacher training, and takes place over two years. During this time students complete three practicums (also called professional experience, placements and practical placements):

First year **on-campus** students

Practicum I 20 – 31 October 2025

8 full days (minimum) over 2 weeks of classroom observation

First year **online** students

Practicum 1 21 July - 14 November 2025

8 full days minimum of classroom observation to be completed between the above dates.

Second year **on-campus** students

Practicum II 28 April – 16 May 2025

12 full days minimum over 3 weeks – “Manage Classrooms & Child Study.”

Practicum III 25 August – 19 September 2025

16 full days minimum over 4 weeks – “Develop Learning Programs.”

Second year **online** students

Practicum II 24 February – 19 June 2025

12 full days minimum to be completed during terms 5 or 6 – “Manage Classrooms & Child Study.”

Practicum III 21 July – 14 November 2025

16 full days minimum to be completed during terms 7 or 8 – “Develop Learning Programs.”

It is expected that students will make appropriate arrangements and adjustments to other commitments to accommodate the practicum periods. A full day comprises of 8 hours per day.

Teaching is a profession and it is very important to provide students with as many opportunities as possible to experience the rich environment of a classroom and to learn by doing under the guidance of experienced professional teachers.

Students have the opportunity to observe and learn from role model teachers and to teach as much as they can while under professional and supportive supervision: whole classes, small groups or individual students. It is a marvelous opportunity for students to experience themselves as potential teachers; they will gain confidence and learn to be comfortable with and develop the **professional persona of a teacher**.

2. Professional Experience Placements

The Seminar has a list of Steiner Schools that have been approved as suitable for the Professional Experience. Requests for schools other than these will be considered; however, it remains up to the discretion of the Seminar as to whether to approve these requests.

The Seminar follows a set procedure for students to express placement preferences. The students' preferences will be considered against a series of key points:

- Suitability of the placement
 - Variety of practicum experiences e.g. Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary
 - Professional vocation of the student
- Accumulated placement demands on individual schools
- Availability of supervising teachers
- Specific needs of the teachers and their class
- Practical capacity of student to manage
 - Travel
 - Finance
 - Pastoral care
 - Family matters
 - Accommodation

All efforts are made to make preferred placements possible; however, students need to be flexible and ready to accept non-preferred options. Students may be required to travel a distance from their home, including interstate, provided there are no travel or other restrictions.

Students are not to approach schools or teachers directly to negotiate placement options (unless specifically advised by the Seminar).

Students are not to arrange (swap) confirmed placements amongst themselves.

OVERSEAS PLACEMENTS

There are many well-established Rudolf Steiner schools world-wide accessible for Professional Experience placements. In principle, placements outside Australia are possible after thorough discussion and planning with the Seminar.

Consideration needs to be given to issues of visas and/or work permits. Certain regions will not be considered for political and safety reasons.

No financial support is available from the Seminar for interstate or overseas placements.

3. Student support

Before the Professional Experience:

- Students receive advice and counseling as to their choice of placement.
- Students receive advice about professional and personal expectations regarding the Professional Experience.

During the Professional Experience:

- The Seminar may visit students (email/phone if interstate or overseas) during their practicum to check progress and address any issues of concern.
- The supervising teacher or school administration are asked to contact the Seminar immediately if there are any issues around student attendance, learning support, welfare, or professional conduct.
- Students may contact the Seminar at any time during business hours Monday to Thursday or – in urgent cases – via the Practicum Supervisors after hours. Students must not hesitate to contact the Seminar immediately if they are concerned, worried, dissatisfied or upset.
- The Seminar aims to provide flexibility to international students with respect to the lessons they can deliver while on Professional Experience.

After the Professional Experience:

- The Seminar provides timetabled review sessions for students to share their learning experience, debrief and reflect.

Complaints & appeals

Any serious issues or complaints arising before, during or after the Professional Experience Placement must be immediately reported to the Seminar from where it will be dealt with according to the Seminar's *Complaints and Appeals policy*.

Contacts:

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar	+61 3 9876 5199
Tom Hungerford, Practicum Supervisor	+61 452 592 903
Larissa Lemon, Practicum Supervisor	+61 402 354 640

4. Insurance

1. Seminar Students are covered by the Seminar's insurance policy for accidents/injury 24 hours a day, 365 days per year while undertaking professional experience within Australia.
2. Additionally, students on workplace experience may be covered by Work Cover Insurance.
3. For international placements, students must have valid travel insurance for the period of the practicum that covers health, accidents and loss of possessions.

5. Protocols

On a Professional Experience placement, students are expected to act with appropriate professionalism and discretion. They should observe the following protocols for a student teacher:

1. Establish role-clarity: Discuss with the teacher when you observe, participate in class activities, team teach or teach. Who is in charge? What is your role with the parents?
2. Specialist teachers coming into the class: introduce yourself, ask if it is all right to stay. What is your role?
3. Do not initiate distracting conversations with a child during class time; your task is to assist the teacher in keeping the children focused. You should be aware that when other adults are in the classroom children often react unsettled or boisterously.
4. Ask questions of the Supervising Teacher at a previously agreed time. At times your views may differ to those of your teacher; we ask you to refrain from engaging in arguments or lengthy discussions. If you do have any concerns please call the Seminar.
5. Teachers are busy people and by nature their role is very demanding. Your personal demands might just add an extra burden onto them. Please respect their space including their well-deserved break times.
6. Students are expected to behave professionally at all times: speak consciously and with courtesy, dress appropriately and be supportive to the teacher. The Student "Code of Practice" is available in the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar Handbook, which can be obtained directly from the Seminar or from its website <https://steinerseminar.net.au>

6. Dress code & mobile phones

1. Our physical presence has an enormous impact on children and this applies equally when we are visitors to a class. We ask that you give conscious attention to how you dress. Please inform yourself of any dress requirements that the placement school may have. If nothing is specified we offer the following suggestions for your consideration.
 - a. Choose clear plain colours devoid of logos. Wearing black, particularly above the waist-line, is to be avoided in the younger classes and it is to be completely avoided in any Early Childhood settings.
 - b. No caps or beanies in class.
 - c. All clothing must be clean, discreet and guarantee appropriate coverage. Avoid exposing or transparent garments.
 - d. Proper footwear must be worn (no thongs).
 - e. Remove piercings apart from earrings.
2. Mobile phones must be **switched off** during class times. In addition, some schools might have rules and/or expectations that mobile phones are used only in designated areas or not at all during school hours. Again, full discretion is required.

If you expect personal phone calls, please pass onto the caller the school's front office phone number. This is just what would be expected of a teacher.

7. Attendance

Attendance at the Professional Experience placement is **mandatory**.

The Seminar's Attendance Record is the means by which your Supervising Teacher verifies your attendance for assessment. See Document section.

Professional Experience placement is to be treated *as if* you are an employee of the School where you have been placed. Students are required to ring **both the placement school and the Seminar** if they are going to be absent for any reason. Students must also provide supporting medical documentation if they are absent due to illness.

100% attendance is a requirement for successful completion of units incorporating the Professional Experience. Days missed during a placement **must be made up** in a timely way by arrangement through the Practicum Coordinator. This must be arranged in writing via the **Special Consideration** process (forms available on Seminar Intranet).

The Seminar will counsel and provide support to prevent an unsatisfactory attendance record.

International students are reminded that where there is an unsatisfactory record of attendance the Seminar is obliged to notify the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. This may affect your visa status.

8. Important legal matters

Working with Children Check

All students on Professional Experience must have a **Working with Children Check (WWCC)** or equivalent. There are two types: Volunteer and Employee. You are only required to have the Volunteer one. Because trainee teachers have contact with school children it is mandatory to have a WWCC.

Please note: States have different requirements and only some states accept the Victorian WWCC. Students planning interstate placements must check with the relevant state authority well in advance and apply for that state's WWCC (or Blue Card) if required.

Supervised teaching

Student teachers who have no VIT registration or equivalent must not be left in charge of classes or individuals at any time without teacher supervision. You must contact the school's office, principal or leading teacher immediately if this should occur in an emergency situation.

Photography

You may not in any circumstances take photos of school children. If you would like to photograph student work, such as craft or Main Lesson books, you are required to seek permission from the supervising teacher and take any photos after school hours when the children have left for the day.

Social Media

Do not share social media contacts with class students under any circumstance!

Be aware of your internet profile. Search yourself on the Internet and make sure there is no content that can be misconstrued. Students, parents and potential future employers are likely to look you up and they need to be able to have confidence in you as a professional educator. *"The appearance of unethical behavior can be just as damaging to public confidence in the profession as unethical conduct itself."* (Teachers' Professional Code of Practice; ACT)

9. Practical advice before and upon arrival at the placement school

Making contact

Once you know the class you are in and the name of the Supervising Teacher, you should write a letter including the following:

- Thank the teacher for accepting you
- Give a brief introduction of yourself
- Ask if you can prepare for anything e.g. a certain Main Lesson, epoch story
- Ask if it is appropriate to get a class list so you can start learning names
- Give your contact details

Email this letter to Tom tom.hungerford@steinerseminar.edu.au who will forward it to the Supervising teacher with your contact details.

In the week prior to your Practicum commencing, personally *ring your host school*. This is an opportunity to alert them to your pending arrival. Enquire about the following:

- The front desk person's name
- The school's dress code
- The schools physical address
- The school's time table
- Issues of transport, access, parking
- Induction arrangements
- *Other possible pre-requisites, e.g. Child-safe training/requirements*

A relaxed arrival

We recommend that you check on a map the details of the school address *well in advance*. Consider making your trip and arrival smooth and stress free by allowing enough time to:

- Drive/take public transport
- Park and walk to the school reception
- Register your arrival at the school reception in good time *before classes start*.

During registration

- Make sure you know the name and class of your Supervising Teacher
- Ask about school or legal requirements, e.g. wearing ID tags
- Ask for an appropriate time to get an induction to the school (see next page)
- Make sure the **Workplace Agreement** is signed and that it will be mailed to the Seminar immediately!

Induction to the school

After arrival at your school you should *at the earliest possible time ask for an induction to the school* to ensure your safety, wellbeing and comfort. In particular you must find out:

- Emergency procedures for the school and your classroom in particular
- First call of emergency in case your Supervising Teacher is absent or incapacitated. This is very important as it is illegal for unregistered teachers to be unsupervised with school children.
- The physical environment and layout of the school
- Staff room arrangements
- Lockers and/or safe storage for personal belongings
- First Aid and sanitary facilities
- Who is and where to find your placement coordinator and/or principal
- Arrangements in case your Supervising Teacher is absent and the class is given a Casual Relief Teacher (CRT)

10. Documents to be taken to placement school

You will need to take the following important documents to your placement school

DOCUMENT	WHAT TO DO
Practicum Schedule and Agreement	Fill in your emergency contact details and sign this form. Hand to School office upon arrival on your first day, <i>ask them to sign, scan & email it to us immediately</i> as it affects your <i>WorkSafe cover</i> .
Working With Children Check or copy of VIT registration	Deliver to School office upon arrival. They need this for their records.
Practicum I Parameters - Introduction Letter to Supervising Teacher	Hand this to the Supervising Teacher along with the documents below. <i>Make sure your teacher reads this to ensure accurate expectations.</i>
Supervising Teacher's Evaluation	<p>Give to your supervising teacher and ensure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that on your last day you and the teacher find a time to sit down and go through it together that it is completed and returned to you for submission with your assignment. that you return it to Seminar and submit with relevant assessment portfolio. <p><i>If this is left with the supervising teacher there can be long delays in getting it returned. As it forms part of your assessment this may have consequences for your course completion.</i></p>
Supervising Teacher's Personal Evaluation (Practicum II only)	(as above)
Practicum Attendance record sheet	Give to your supervising teacher and ask that it be filled in each day. Collect it along with your Evaluation Form on the last day of your practicum. Return to Seminar with relevant assessment cover sheet
Your relevant course assignments (see page 20 – 22)	Read them carefully and start working on them from the beginning of your practicum. This will make it a manageable exercise. Note the due date and hand them in when you return to the Seminar.

11. Final check list before practicum

- Have you thoroughly studied this *Professional Experience Handbook*? ☐
- Are you conscious of your legal obligations? (Page 11) ☐
- Have you carefully planned your transport arrangements? ☐
- Have you made arrangements for your accommodation (if applicable)? ☐
- Do you know your Supervising Teacher's name and class level? ☐
- Are you fully aware of the Performance Criteria for the Units of Study addressed through the Professional Experience? ☐
- Have you taken all the required documents (page 14) including your assignments (Pages 19-22) and do you understand the set tasks? ☐
- Have you got the Seminar's contact details? ☐

12. Evaluation criteria for Supervising Teacher defining *Professional conduct, participation, planning and teaching*

NAT10825001, NAT10825014, NAT10825015, NAT10825016

General evaluation Professional Experience I – II

Guiding statements in regard to the Student's developing capacities as a classroom teacher

- **“Appropriate personal presence is displayed”will include evidence of:**
 - Appropriate personal presentation:
 - Speech
 - Dress
 - Deportment
 - Effort and commitment
 - Calming presence
 - Awareness of the need to support the teacher and the classroom environment
- **“Warm professional relationship to the children is displayed”.....will include evidence of:**
 - Warmth and friendliness
 - Awareness of professional relationship with children
- **“Appropriate communication skills are displayed”will include evidence of:**
 - Clarity of speech
 - Use of language
 - Appropriate body language
 - Responsiveness to advice
 - Rapport with staff

Evaluation specific for Professional Experience I

- **“Activities”**
 - In what activities did the Student participate? For example, small groups, craft, games, singing, storytelling, morning circle etc.
 - Which 2 learning activities did the student implement?
 - The Student's potential to work with children in the classroom.
- **Feedback”**
 - Areas of strength
 - Areas for improvement (at least 2)

Evaluation specific for Professional Experience II

- **“Integrate classroom management principles into own lesson planning for lesson delivery(E#2.1 of NAT10825014)”will include evidence of:**
 - Sensitive profiling of class, identifying students individual needs
 - Ability
 - Attitude
 - Temperaments (if applicable)
 - Over-all character
 - Cultural background
- **“Identify learning activities for individual learning needs to manage the classroom environment (E#2.2 of NAT10825014)” ...will include evidence of:**
 - Lesson Plans provided show clear consideration of the above profile
 - Lesson plans are sighted and signed by Supervising Teacher prior to lesson delivery
 - Providing for different levels of competence
 - Providing for different modes of learning
 - Providing for different temperaments (if applicable)
 - Minimum of 3 lesson plans submitted in practicum portfolio
- **“Demonstrate classroom management approaches to optimize student learning (E#2.3 of NAT10825014)”will include evidence of:**
 - Of a minimum of 6 attempted teaching occasions, effective management of a classroom on 3 teaching occasions
 - Positive rapport with students
 - Authority inherent in the teacher’s own personal presence
 - Communicating clear expectations
 - Flow of lesson; change and rhythm of activities
 - Use of voice, voice projection and tone
 - Follow through consistently with expectations
 - Confidence in managing small groups and the whole class

Teaching occasions include but are not limited to

- Whole class practice session
- Extended story Telling
- Small group/individual support
- Teaching songs, poems and games
- Teaching craft and/or art activities
- Teaching outdoor and or PE activities

Evaluation specific for Professional Experience III

- **“Apply pedagogical understanding of lesson planning (E#2.2 of NAT10825015)” ...**
will include evidence of:
 - 9 x Lesson plans
 - **Lesson plans are sighted and signed by Supervising Teacher prior to lesson delivery**
 - Working from the whole to the part as a pedagogical principle
 - Child development considerations
 - Differentiated learning rates
 - Temperaments (if applicable)
 - Different learning styles
 - Scaffolding of content development
 - Rhythm and timing including understanding and including the role of sleep
 - Engaging imagination
 - Arts integration
 - Assessment planning

- **“Teach and evaluate lessons (E#3.1 & 3.3 of NAT10825015)” ...** will include evidence of
 - A minimum total of 9 lessons are planned, taught and evaluated over the practicum period
 - Student taught in a minimum of 3 different learning areas
 - Student taught a minimum of 3 lessons in each of the above learning areas

Please note:

All *Supervising Teacher’s Evaluations* are *Third Party Reports* in legal terms of assessment. The Seminar tutors who assess the relevant Unit of Study will include the *Supervising Teacher’s Evaluation* in their discernment of satisfactory completion of the relevant course unit.

Usually, the Supervising Teacher completes and discusses with the Student the Evaluation towards the end of the practicum placement. Students should sign the Evaluation only if they understand and agree with it.

12. Assessment tasks completed on Practicum

As shown on the following tables, multiple assessment tasks embedded in units of study are completed during or based on the Professional Experience.

1 st Years			
Professional Experience – Classroom Practicum I,			
Unit Code	Unit description	Element	Assessment Task
NAT1082 5001 Ass 6	Work within the framework of Steiner pedagogy	2.2 Develop teaching practice to reflect the pedagogy of Steiner education 2.3 Proactively identify and respond to opportunities to expand own knowledge of the pedagogy of Steiner education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit satisfying Supervising Teacher's evaluation form. • Submit satisfying Professional Experience Attendance Record • Submit portfolio containing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Observation journal ○ Resource collection ○ Personal reflection

2 nd Years			
Professional Experience – Classroom Practicum II,			
Unit Code	Unit description	Element	Assessment Task
NAT1082 5003 Ass 3	Apply Goethean observation skills and techniques to undertake a child study.	2. Implement Child Study practice as pedagogical research	Written task: Child study according to Child Study guidelines and template
NAT1082 5014 Ass 2	Manage Classrooms for effective teaching and learning	3.1 Observe and critique techniques implemented to manage challenging situations to identify strategies of improvement	Written task (Observation 800-1000 words) as outlined in assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit in Practicum Portfolio
		2.1 Integrate classroom management principles into own lesson planning for lesson delivery in the workplace. 2.2 Identify learning activities for individual needs to manage the classroom environment 2.3 Demonstrate classroom management approaches to optimize student learning 3.2 Reflect on and evaluate own classroom management practices for future lesson planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete class profile according to template • Submit at least 3 individual lesson plans on template provided • Manage classroom effectively on a minimum of 3 (out of 6) teaching occasions • Reflect on and evaluate each occasion as part of your lesson plans • Satisfactory Supervising Teacher's Evaluation • Satisfactory Attendance Record • Submit all the above in Practicum Portfolio
	For your own professional portfolio		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources collected as per lesson plan Submit list in Practicum Portfolio

2 nd Years			
Professional Experience – Classroom Practicum III,			
Unit Code	Unit description	Element / performance criteria	Assessment Task
NAT1082 5016 Ass 2	Develop inclusive teaching practices to support students with special learning needs	3.1 Apply Child Study practices to identify learning needs 3.2 Implement a theoretical framework to determine options for intervention 3.3 Design a customized learning plan to address specific needs of an individual learner	Written task: Special needs child study and individual support program
NAT1082 5015 Ass 2	Develop learning and assessment programs	2.2 Create a lesson plan to a teach topic from the “whole to the part” 3.1 Design and deliver a planned program of lessons to meet a learning outcome 3.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of lesson planning to improve own teaching practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory Attendance Record Satisfactory Supervising Teacher’s Evaluation Complete and deliver 9 lesson plans Lesson plans must contain reflection and evaluation Submit the above in the Practicum Portfolio
		3.2 Document and collate resources to support teaching practice	Include collection of teaching resources in the Practicum Portfolio .
		3.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of lesson planning to improve own teaching practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete journal of reflections and evaluation (~300 words) Submit in the Practicum Portfolio
NAT1082 5013 Ass 5	Communicate and relate professionally	4.1 Evaluate own strengths and weaknesses in communication processes to improve performance 4.2 Interpret the “Motto for the Social Ethic” in relationship to own inner development practices to support professional communication 4.3 Reflect on the “Twelves Virtues” for integration into own communication practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep a written reflective journal over the period of your practicum (~500words) Submit in the Practicum Portfolio
NAT1082 5001 Ass 8a	Work within the framework of Steiner pedagogy	3.1 Research and prepare information resources to communicate the pedagogy of Steiner education to parents and peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and collect and annotate curriculum parameters Submit in the Practicum Portfolio

			(assignment combined with NAT10825 013, Ass 3b, Communicate effectively with parents)
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13. Space for notes