



ALIA Guidelines for Industry Placement: Diploma of Library and Information Services

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Purpose of industry placement opportunities for students

An industry placement provides an opportunity for students undertaking an ALIA accredited course to apply library and information science (LIS) theory and skills in an appropriately supervised practical professional industry environment.

Professional experience is an essential requirement for students undertaking an ALIA accredited course at the diploma level. It is an expectation that every student graduating from an ALIA accredited course has completed the minimum industry placement at an appropriate professional level. Industry placement is not an opportunity for a host organisation to acquire free labour but an opportunity for the host to support the next generation of LIS professionals gain valuable professional experience. An industry placement is also different from a student volunteering for an organisation as an industry placement is formally and legally linked to the education provider and is an assessable part of an ALIA accredited course.

TAFE/RTO's organising industry placements for their students should approach a wide range of host organisations reflecting the diversity in the LIS profession: including all LIS sectors, university, TAFE, school, public and special libraries or information and archiving services and industry partners such as vendors and suppliers.

ALIA requirements for industry placements

The TAFE/RTO needs to demonstrate:

- how students are provided industry placement/ practicum opportunities
- the length of the industry placement (minimum 10-day duration) per course
- the learning expectations
- provide details of the practical skill assessment process during industry placement, especially for distance/ online education students and the guidelines provided to industry placement supervisors.

ALIA recommended best practice industry placement processes

Ongoing recognition of an ALIA accredited course requires each graduating student undertake a minimum industry placement of 10 days duration during their course. ALIA has had requests for more detail on industry placement processes by some educators seeking guidance on best



practice principles in industry placements. Below are suggested best practice guidelines for organising industry placements. We hope these guidelines are useful.

ALIA support for TAFE/RTO organising industry placements

ALIA offers to each ALIA accredited TAFE/RTO a free promotional request/listing in *ALIA Weekly* to seek employers available to offer industry placements to their students.

Information supplied by TAFE/RTO to students about industry placements

Students should be informed in writing (preferably in an explanatory industry placement booklet) their rights and obligations during an industry placement including that they are expected to meet any expenses involved in the industry placement, for example travel costs, parking fees, childcare etc. Students need to be informed that they will not be paid during the industry placement and provided with access to the [Fair Work Ombudsman Vocational Placements Fact Sheet](#).

Summary of the Fair Work Guidelines for unpaid work experience

“Unpaid work experience, job placements and internships that are not vocational placements will be unlawful if the person is in an employment relationship with the business or organisation they are doing the work for. People in employment relationships are employees of a business and entitled to:

- a minimum wage
- the National Employment Standards
- the terms of any applicable award or registered agreement.”

TAFE/RTO organisation of an industry placement

Industry placements may be hosted in all LIS sectors, university, vocational, school, public and special library or information and archiving services and industry partners such as vendors and suppliers where the student can be given supervision by a qualified professional who is eligible for professional membership of the Australian Library and Information Association.



ALLIA recommends that a student's industry placement is hosted in an organisation with which they do not have a current working relationship. Previous experience in these situations has shown that students and employers at times find it difficult to distinguish between the practicum and work and may experience a conflict of interest in undertaking the assessment process. Also, it is considered important that students gain a breadth of experience, have an opportunity to work in diverse types of organisations and be exposed to different corporate cultures.

In the event of the industry placement being at the students' current workplace, the industry placement experience, tasks and or project should be negotiated with the employer by the course placement coordinator so that the student has the opportunity to undertake a role that offers different tasks to their existing position, for example working in a different area/section of the library preferably with a different supervisor or work on a special project.

Responsibilities of the industry placement coordinator

The industry placement coordinator is responsible for:

1. Preparing the industry placement guidelines, forms and agreements and an information booklet for both students and the supervisors.
2. Organising the list of possible industry placement host organisations and supervisors.
3. Identifying legal requirements and obligations for the student at an industry placement e.g. a Working with vulnerable peoples check etc
4. Organising the industry placement with the student and the industry placement supervisor.
5. Ensuring industry placement supervisors and students are aware of insurance coverage and the Student Placement Agreement.
6. Ensuring industry placement supervisors and students are contacted and supported during the practicum.
7. Managing assessment and evaluation of the student.

Responsibilities of the industry placement supervisor

The industry placement supervisor should be a professional employed by the host organisation and shall be responsible for:

1. Approving the placement for the student and organising signing of the Student Placement Agreement.



2. Meeting with the student to discuss the industry placement. (Pre-industry placement meeting)
3. Organising the work schedule for the student and providing the student with an industry placement program. This schedule should cover the range of activities suited to the level of the student. At all levels, depending on the industry environment, some non-professional tasks may be undertaken but must be a minor part of the industry placement.
4. Providing guidance by giving the student a thorough orientation to the workplace and integrating the student into the work environment and culture.
5. Offering guidance in the selection and management of a suitable industry placement project if applicable. This project should be of benefit to both the host organisation and the student. Work on the project should be carried out during the industry placement.
6. Alerting the industry placement coordinator, as soon as possible, should any issues arise that may impact on the success of the industry placement, or on the student's performance.
7. Ensuring the student has regular feedback on his or her performance during the industry placement, including a final debriefing session at the conclusion of the industry placement in which an overall evaluation is discussed.
8. Evaluating the student at the end of the industry placement preferably using the TAFE/RTO supplied industry placement assessment form to rate the student on a range of personal, professional and technological competencies.
9. Submitting the assessment form to the industry placement coordinator within two weeks of the completion of the industry placement.
10. Inspiring and enthusing the student about the information profession.

Responsibilities of the student

The student is responsible for:

1. Planning the industry placement with the industry placement coordinator. Informing themselves of industry placement expectations and procedures (reading the information booklet)
2. Liaising with the industry placement supervisor concerning the industry placement e.g. Attending a pre-industry placement meeting.
3. Discussing an industry placement project with the industry placement supervisor.
4. Contributing to the work of the host organisation.



5. Reporting any problems, as soon as possible, to the industry placement supervisor and/or the industry placement coordinator.
6. Undertaking industry placement assessment tasks.
7. Writing a letter of thanks at the end of the industry placement to the industry placement supervisor.
8. Completing a *Student Evaluation of industry placement* Form and returning this to the industry placement coordinator within two weeks of completing the placement.

The student is expected to:

1. Communicate in a professional manner with staff and clients.
2. Undertake the industry placement without remuneration.
3. Work to the rostered staff times during the industry placement, including evenings and weekend work where applicable, but only where covered by their workplace insurance.
4. Treat all staff with respect and consideration.
5. Present himself or herself in a professional manner.
6. Act ethically and responsibly with the host organisation, staff and clients.
7. Observe the host organisation's dress code.
8. Undertake with diligence negotiated duties assigned to them during the industry placement.
9. Observe public holidays taken by the host organisation.
10. Notify the industry placement supervisor at the beginning of the working day in cases of ill health. A medical certificate must be produced for any sick leave of more than two days.
11. Report any significant loss of time at the industry placement site due to illness or other problems to the industry placement coordinator so that decisions can be made about whether the student should make up this time.

Possible tasks for students undertaking an industry placement

The industry placement experience for a student is to be at an appropriate professional level and is to reflect the expectations an employer would have of a graduate for example at the ALIA Library Technician level. Under supervision:

- Circulation and customer service duties
- Conduct bibliographical searches in printed and electronic formats
- Answer reference enquiries by telephone, in person and by electronic access



- Select and order new material for library stock in any format including analysing quality of materials available on the Internet and evaluating databases
- Accession, classify and copy catalogue new stock
- Prepare current awareness bulletins
- Organise promotional activities, such as displays
- Maintain web-pages
- Develop databases and intranets
- Undertake outreach activities such as homebound services, holiday activities, popup libraries, storytelling and children's activities (both internal and external to library)
- Participate in library programs and events
- Offer or assist with information literacy skills training to clients, such as the use of databases and the Internet
- Arrange interlibrary loans
- Attend meetings, interact with staff
- Write reports and prepare presentations
- Research and assess potential technologies and equipment for implementation
- Update the library/information service's social media presence
- Search a range of online databases
- Data management tasks, such as migration of data and editing
- Records surveys and audits and development of disposal schedules
- Appraisal of closed files and more complex items against approved R&D schedule
- Update and create new records in an EDRMS, archives management system or other business system
- Preparation of closed files for disposal
- Creation of destruction authority lists and archival transmittal and consignment lists
- Assist in the preparation of selected records for archival storage
- Index and classify incoming items using controlled language
- Promote the service to users and non-users, such as in-house newsletters, flyers and brochures
- Prepare user manuals
- Analyse and evaluate the application of software



Students could also be provided with the opportunity to undertake a small project that they alone are responsible for. Guidance on this project should be available from the industry placement coordinator.

Industry placement contact by TAFE/RTO LIS staff

For all industry placements, the TAFE/RTO industry placement coordinator or another Information Studies staff member should contact the industry placement supervisor to check on the progress of students. If possible, students should be contacted at these times as well.

ALIA recommends that each student receive one visit or contact by telephone, Skype or email during their placement. Extra visits should be arranged at the request of either the student or the industry placement supervisor. In all cases, industry placement supervisors and students should be able to contact the industry placement coordinator as often as necessary throughout the placement.

Student evaluation of industry placement

Students should be given the opportunity to complete a confidential evaluation of their industry placement. This can provide important feedback to the TAFE/RTO about student industry placement support and the suitability of an industry placement provider and in planning future industry placements. Students should also be encouraged to reflect on their industry placement experience using the principles put forward by the ALIA PD Scheme as acknowledgement of the importance of a commitment to ongoing professional development.

Guidelines provided to industry placement supervisors

Detailed guidelines should be available to the industry placement supervisors including the expected responsibilities of the supervisor, coordinator and student, Fair Work guidelines, TAFE/RTO industry placement legal agreements and insurances, assessment and feedback. For example, in an industry placement booklet.

Assessment of a student undertaking an industry placement

All students should be able to demonstrate to both the industry placement supervisor and TAFE/RTO industry placement coordinator that they have related class learning to operational



experience in their host service. In addition, students also should be able to demonstrate that they have a sound grasp of both the theory and practice of the relevant area of study and the requisite skills and knowledge to become practitioners.

The student's performance should be evaluated in a number of ways:

- The assignments for the industry placement unit (if applicable)
- Feedback by the industry placement supervisor of the student's performance during the industry placement
- Evaluation by an industry placement coordinator or an TAFE/RTO educator
- Self-evaluation of the practicum placement and student's performance

Feedback to a student undertaking an industry placement by the industry placement supervisor

The industry placement supervisor should provide feedback of the student's performance during the industry placement. ALIA suggests to assist the industry placement supervisor an industry placement supervisor feedback form is provided by TAFE/RTO. All students should have the right to access their feedback form, students may also use a copy for referee employment purposes. If students do not receive the completed form at the conclusion of their industry placement they should be able to request a copy from the industry placement coordinator. Industry placement supervisors need to be informed that feedback may not be confidential.

ALIA recommends that the industry placement supervisor and the industry placement coordinator each discuss the feedback with the student at the conclusion of their industry placement.

Industry placement agreements and insurance

A TAFE/RTO should have a written legal agreement for all industry placements. The legal agreement should identify and describe the responsibilities of the TAFE/RTO and the host and students in the industry placement. The agreement should also outline information on insurance provisions provided by the TAFE/RTO to all parties prior to commencing the industry placement. In consultation with the industry placement coordinator, the student placement agreement should be initiated and completed prior to the commencement of the industry placement.



Industry placement students undertaking approved industry placements should be covered under the TAFE/RTO's Insurance Policy and Public Liability/Professional Indemnity Insurance Policy while involved in authorised activities.

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