



Practice Education Student Handbook

February 2024

MASTER OF SPEECH PATHOLOGY

School of Health Sciences | College of Health and Medicine

UNIVERSITY of
TASMANIA 

Acknowledgment of Country

The University of Tasmania acknowledges with deep respect the traditional owners of lutruwita (Tasmania), the palawa people.

The palawa people belong to one of the oldest continuing cultures in the world. Our Island is deeply unique with spectacular landscapes. Our cities and towns are surrounded by bushland, wilderness, mountain ranges and beaches.

The palawa people have cared and protected this Country for thousands of years. They know this land, they live on the land, and they died on these lands. We honour them. We acknowledge with deep respect their knowledge that represents a range of cultural practices, wisdom, traditions, and ways of knowing the world.

We pay our respects to elders past and present who have led their communities through times of stability, of change, of invasion and dispossession, and are still leading today. We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal community that continue to care for Country.

The University of Tasmania recognises a history of truth which acknowledges the impacts of invasion and colonisation upon Aboriginal people resulting in the forcible removal from their lands.

As speech pathologists, we recognise with sorrow the palawa people's loss of language and we strive to support the palawa people to have a voice.

The University of Tasmania stands for a future that values Aboriginal perspectives, culture, language and history, and a continued effort to fight for Aboriginal justice and rights, paving the way for a strong future.

Acknowledgments

This Practice Education Handbook was developed by the speech pathology course academic team in consultation with practice educators in the community, the University of Tasmania College of Health and Medicine Professional Experience Placement team, and School of Health Sciences Placement team.

Some of the content of this Handbook is adapted from the equivalent resources for the UTAS Master of Clinical Psychology and Bachelor of Nursing, as well as speech pathology programs at the Australian Catholic University, Curtin University, Flinders University, and Griffith University.

Disclaimer

The content in this Handbook is complementary to information provided on the University of Tasmania [Professional Experience Placement](#) website and information provided about specific practice education components of units within the Master of Speech Pathology. If there is inconsistency between the information provided, please contact the Speech Pathology Practice Education Coordinator for clarification.

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Introduction to speech pathology practice education

This Practice Education Student Handbook explains the opportunities, requirements, and procedures for practice education within the Master of Speech Pathology (MSPPath) at the University of Tasmania. It provides general information about your practice education program organisation as well as practical and procedural guidelines. We expect that you will read and understand this information before your first placement and meet the requirements and follow the procedures outlined for each placement in the course. This Handbook is revised regularly so make sure you have the current version and refer to it throughout your course. The current version of this Handbook will be available on MyLO.

Practice education learning should be challenging and rewarding. It is an important and valued component of your developmental pathway to meeting *the [Professional Standards for Speech Pathologists in Australia](#)*¹ ('Professional Standards'). The Professional Standards provide the minimum standards for speech pathology practice in Australia. Through your practice education placements, you will develop and demonstrate core areas of competence in the domains of professional conduct; reflective practice and life-long learning; and speech pathology practice.

KEY THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR PRACTICE EDUCATION

- You must complete the Professional Experience Placement (PEP) compliance requirements at the start of your course (in the first semester of your first year) and ensure they remain current throughout the course. The compliance information is available on the [PEP website](#). You will upload your compliance documentation to InPlace.
- Placements may be in metropolitan, regional or rural areas throughout Tasmania. External placements are provided by practising speech pathologists as part of their everyday work for government services (e.g., Tasmania Health Service, Department of Education), non-government organisations, or in private practices.
- To ensure equity of placement experiences and a coordinated approach to placement allocation, you cannot organise your own placements.
- The process of scheduling and allocating placements is based on fairness and equity while considering student needs where possible. Placement location will depend on the context and experience required and available.
- Students are required to fulfill placement requirements as outlined in the course and unit handbook, and individual unit outlines. Individual student placements may vary. Placements may continue during non-teaching weeks, assessment periods, and out of semester timeframes.
- You are responsible for managing your learning and being an active learner. This includes negotiating, managing and monitoring your learning goals and plans, and reflecting on your competency development.

¹ Speech Pathology Australia, 2020

PRACTICE EDUCATION: KEY ROLES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Tasmania Placements Team (School of Health Sciences)

Natalie Lucas

The Tasmania Placements team is responsible for the administration of all placements in the School of Health Sciences including maintaining the InPlace database and verifying required pre-placement compliance documentation (e.g. Safety in Practice Agreements). The team also administers the student placement agreements with host organisations.

tasmania.placements@utas.edu.au

+61 3 6324 3990

Practice Education Coordinator (PEC)

Associate Professor Alison Holm

Alison is responsible for practice education co-ordination in the course. She supports students and practice educators in all processes related to placements and is the liaison between the University and the educator. Alison also monitors student progress on placement and co-ordinates student competency assessment with COMPASS®. Alison actively engages with practice educators and students throughout the placement and provides support as required or requested. We seek and respond to feedback from students, practice educators, service providers, clients, Speech Pathology Australia, and other stakeholders to continually improve practice education in the course.

alison.holm@utas.edu.au

+61 3 6324 4408

Unit Coordinator

Associate Professor Alison Holm

Alison is also the Unit Coordinator for each Speech Pathology Practice unit. Alison is responsible for coordination and administration of the assessment items and works with the Academic Lead in relation to unit assessment criteria.

alison.holm@utas.edu.au

+61 3 6324 4408

Academic Lead, Speech Pathology

Professor Anne Whitworth

Anne is responsible for overall governance of the MSpPath. Anne is available to discuss any aspect of practice education with students, practice educators, service providers or other stakeholders. Anne is involved in matters concerning student progression between units including unsatisfactory progress, alternative enrolments, and changes to enrolment.

anne.whitworth@utas.edu.au

+61 3 6324 3563

OVERVIEW OF THE MASTER OF SPEECH PATHOLOGY

The MSpPath is a two-year course at the University of Tasmania. The course aims to prepare speech pathologists for entry into practice, capable of providing quality and safe person-, community- and population-centred care across a range of geographical and practice settings, including rural and remote areas. Emphasis is placed on preparing graduates as critically reflective, evidence-based practitioners to work collaboratively in interprofessional teams and provide leadership and innovation to the development of socially, ethically and culturally sensitive solutions to optimise communication and swallowing across the lifespan. The content and framework of the course is guided by the Professional Standards. The practice education philosophy is holistic and extends across the scope of speech pathology practice contexts and roles.

Accreditation

The Master of Speech Pathology at the University of Tasmania has been granted *Provisional Accreditation* for the period 8 August 2023 to 8 August 2026. This enables graduates of the program to be eligible for certified practising membership of Speech Pathology Australia and seek employment as speech pathologists anywhere in Australia.

OVERVIEW OF PRACTICE EDUCATION IN THE COURSE

Purpose of practice education

Practice education is where you engage with professional contexts (e.g., hospitals, schools, clinics) and work with practicing speech pathologists to integrate, apply and extend the knowledge and skills developed in other units within the course. Practice education placements are an integral component of the MSpPath.

Across the practice education placements in the course, you will experience a variety of professional contexts and service delivery models. You will develop an understanding of the scope of speech pathology, the relationship between speech pathology and other professions, and the importance of interprofessional practice. You will not experience every aspect of speech pathology practice on placement, but you will develop the essential skills that are *transferable* to other practice environments.

Speech Pathology Practice: Unit structure and assessment

There is a Speech Pathology Practice stream of four units within the MSpPath course. The focus of the Speech Pathology Practice units is to develop your competence and confidence to deliver services to optimise communication and swallowing across the lifespan and in different practice contexts. Practice education placements are central to the Speech Pathology Practice units. However, these units also include other learning and assessment tasks including online learning activities, simulated learning and role play activities, and skill development activities in residential school workshops. The Speech Pathology Practice units require students to apply and integrate knowledge and capabilities from the other units in the MSpPath course to the professional practice of speech pathology.

All placements occur within a Speech Pathology Practice academic unit. The unit coordinator for each Speech Pathology Practice unit is responsible for the assessment items within the unit and for developing and delivering learning activities that support practice education placements. There are opportunities to develop hands-on skills practice and hurdle skill tasks to complete.

Unit	Context	Typical schedule
<i>Stage 1 - CXA725 Speech Pathology Practice 1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential School workshops • 3 days in early childhood context • 3 days in primary school context • 3 days in aged care context 	1 day/week for 9 weeks Sept-Oct
<i>Stage 2 - CXA726 Speech Pathology Practice 2</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential School workshops • 20 days in either an adult or paediatric service placement context 	2 days/week for 10 weeks Apr-June
<i>Stage 3 - CXA729 Speech Pathology Practice 3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential School workshops • 20 days in either an adult or paediatric service placement context 	2 days/week for 10 weeks Sept-Nov
<i>Stage 4 - CXA745 Speech Pathology Practice 4</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential School workshops • 20 days in an adult placement service context • 20 days in a paediatric placement service context 	4A: 2 days/week for 10 weeks Feb-April 4B: 4 days/week for 5 weeks May-June

All Speech Pathology Practice unit assessment tasks are assessed on a Pass/Fail basis. You do not receive a 'grade' for their practice skill development but must achieve the minimum benchmark expectation for a given stage in the course. The unit coordinator is responsible for taking all available information into account and applying the Pass/Fail criteria on assessment tasks and the unit overall. The unit coordinator works with the Practice Education Coordinator (when this is a different academic staff member) and the Academic Lead in relation to unit assessment criteria.

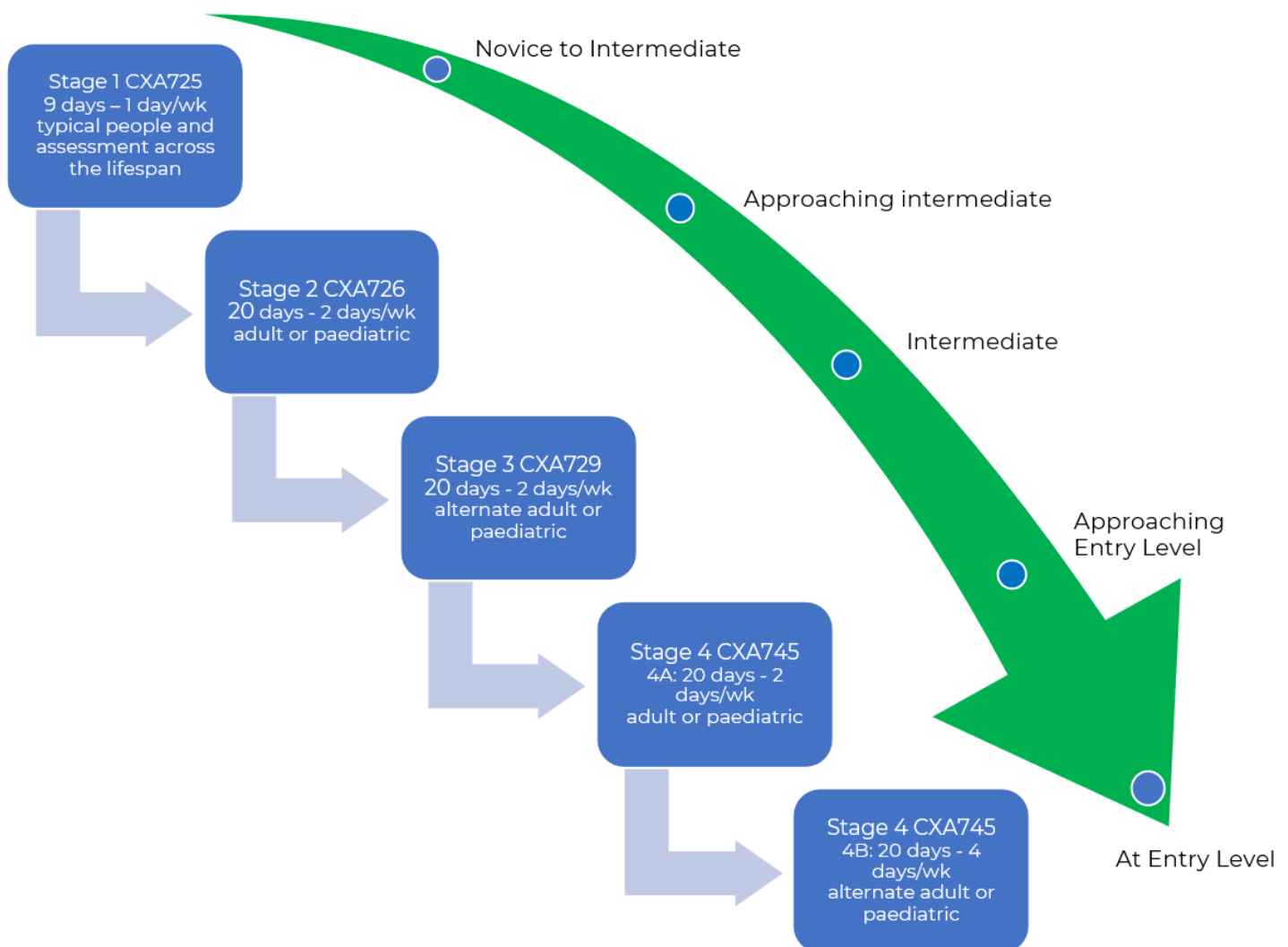
Interprofessional Capability Framework

In Stage 1 of the course, you complete CXA705 Becoming an Allied Health Professional that explores practising as an allied health professional within the Interprofessional Capability Framework. This framework identifies our shared allied health processes such as person-centred care, clinical reasoning, cultural responsiveness, and ethical principles to guide decision making and service responses through collaborative team-based care. You will integrate and apply this learning throughout your practice education placements.

You will complete work integrated learning experiences attached to shared, interprofessional units in Stage 3 and Stage 4 of the course. You will be assessed on your development of collaborative practice capabilities that align with the Interprofessional Capability Framework. You will learn more about the work integrated learning experiences in the respective units.

OVERVIEW OF COMPETENCY PROGRESSION

A graduate of the MSpPath course will demonstrate steady and significant progress during and across practice education placements along the [Competency Assessment in Speech Pathology \(COMPASS®\)](#) continuum of Novice to Entry Level competency. To graduate, you will demonstrate competency across all *Professional Standards for Speech Pathologists in Australia* domains.



Complexity, Familiarity and Support

In practice units, a progression in competency is measured across three domains of complexity, familiarity and level of support required. Complexity is defined in terms of developing the ability to move from managing simple to complex tasks that include knowledge, skills and attitude. Familiarity is defined in terms of the development of expertise involving the development of knowledge through experience, integrating this with other knowledge sources and skills, and applying it effectively in clinical situations. Level of support is defined in terms of the degree of guidance required to perform a skill competently.

With competency the degree of complexity increases, while the degree of familiarity and the level of support both decrease. Familiarity decreases because we know you will be able to transfer your knowledge, skill and experience from other contexts into new contexts. So even if you have not been in exactly the same situation before you are able to transfer what you do already know to the new situation – you do not need to be as 'familiar' to be able to manage with some continued support from your PE or peers.

Stage	Complexity	Familiarity	Support
1	Low	High	High
2	Low	High	High
3	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
4	Moderate	Moderate	Low

Your Stage 1 placement takes place with a typical population. Therefore, complexity is low (it is not a clinical population), familiarity is high (you have learned about typical development before going into the placement), and, as it involves the first authentic experience with administration of assessments and analysis of data, the level of support required is high.

In the Stage 2 placement you are introduced to your first clinical populations and will be required to engage in intervention with clients of low complexity and relatively high familiarity (i.e. familiarity is relevant to what we expect you to do independently); level of support is high. During your Stage 3 placement you will engage with a more complex range of clinical populations. Complexity, familiarity and levels of support for independent working are expected to be moderate.

In Stage 4 you are expected to work independently with populations of moderate complexity, moderate familiarity, and with a low level of support.

Stage 1: CXA725 Speech Pathology Practice 1

Your first placement is a 9-day placement split into three 3-day (1 day/week over 3 weeks) experiences in an early childhood centre, a primary school, and an aged care context. This placement experience introduces you to concepts of typical speech, language, hearing, swallowing, voice and fluency development and change across the lifespan. It will also introduce you to speech pathology assessment, analysis and interpretation as well as resource development and/or community education principles. You will start to develop your assessment planning and demonstrate evidence-based practice. It will give you an opportunity to continue to develop your clinical reasoning, communication, and professionalism as you engage and interact with people across the lifespan and their families, your peers and educators, as well as other professionals in a range of contexts.

The placement is a structured communication and mealtime observation, screening and assessment placement using a placement model of 1 speech pathologist Practice Educator (PE) to 4-6 students. You will receive high levels of support from your PE and are supported by online activities, residential school workshops and simulated learning experiences to practice the competencies required.

Your development across the placement will be jointly assessed by the Practice Educators using COMPASS® Online. To be awarded an ungraded pass for this placement you are expected to be between COMPASS® 'novice' and 'intermediate' levels of competency across the Professional Competencies and the CBOS competencies. Refer to the COMPASS® Assessment Resource Manual for further information and description of performance levels. You will need to have an overall rating between 'Novice and Intermediate' and no concerns expressed by the Practice Educators.

Stage 2 and 3: CXA726 Speech Pathology Practice 2 and CXA729 Speech Pathology Practice 3

Your second and third placements take place in a range of external paediatric and adult speech pathology practice contexts. These placements will typically be for 2 days/week for 10 weeks. However, some organisations or students may require different schedules for the 20 days of placement. Depending on the service context you will have experience with either a range of paediatric or adult clients and have an increased responsibility for client management (including assessment and intervention) and/or service responses. If you are in a paediatric placement in Stage 2 then your Stage 3 placement will be in an adult context or vice versa. You will also gain experience in non-direct client-related activities such as administration, case conferences, meetings, and community development. You will demonstrate steady progress along the COMPASS® Visual Analogue Scale (VAS). Online learning activities, residential school workshops and simulated learning activities will provide you with an opportunity to identify and practice skills before attending placement.

A range of placement supervision models may be used during this placement. For example, either a student unit model of 1 speech pathologist Practice Educator (PE) for 4 students (maximum), a paired placement of 2 students to 1-2 PEs or a traditional apprenticeship model of 1 student to 1-2 PEs. The supervisory model is dependent on the placement context.

In Stage 2, you will receive significant levels of support and guidance from your Practice Educator and/or peers. To be awarded an ungraded pass for this placement, you are expected to demonstrate at least 'approaching intermediate' level competency overall on COMPASS® and an 'approaching intermediate' level of competency across the Professional Competencies and the CBOS competencies. This means that your performance will generally reflect the intermediate level competency behavioural descriptors although some novice level behaviours may remain evident. There needs to be evidence of progression towards 'intermediate' level competency along the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) at end-placement assessment when compared with mid-way COMPASS (on competencies where there has been opportunity).

In Stage 3, you will receive moderate levels of support and guidance from your Practice Educator and/or peers. To be awarded an ungraded pass for this placement, you are expected to demonstrate at or above 'intermediate' level competency overall on COMPASS® and 'intermediate' level of competency across the Professional Competencies and the CBOS competencies. No competencies can remain in the 'novice' range. There needs to be evidence of progression of competency along the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) at end-placement assessment when compared with mid-way COMPASS (on competencies where there has been opportunity).

Some examples of the competencies you may be expected to develop on these two placements include: progression in your ability to manage workplace tasks; manage increasing numbers of client sessions in a day; develop and implement assessment management plans with clients; demonstrate evidence-based practice in your planning and management; independently conduct familiar aspects of assessment, diagnosis and/or general management with a small number of clients presenting with communication and/or swallowing difficulties with moderate guidance and support from peers and/or the speech pathology Practice Educator; independently plan familiar aspects of client management with moderate guidance and support from peers and/or the speech pathology Practice Educator.

Stage 4: CXA730 Speech Pathology Practice 4

Your fourth and fifth placements are both in Stage 4 of the course. These placements will be for 20 days each. The penultimate placement will typically be for 2 days/week for 10 weeks. The final placement will typically be for 4-days/week for 5 weeks. However, some organisations or students may require different schedules for the 20 days of placement.

These placements will continue to develop your skills in optimising communication and swallowing to a level of entry-level independence. You will be involved in all aspects of the day-to-day role of a practising speech pathologist and the normal service delivery practices of the organisation. You will demonstrate steady and significant progress along the continuum of competency for the competencies assessed by COMPASS® and demonstrate approaching entry level for the penultimate placement, and entry level for the final placement (with a population different from the penultimate placement).

Penultimate placement: To be awarded an ungraded pass for this placement, you are expected to demonstrate 'approaching entry' level competency overall on COMPASS and an 'approaching entry' level of competency across the Professional Competencies and the CBOS competencies. This means that your performance will generally reflect the 'entry'

level competency behavioural descriptors although some 'intermediate' level behaviours may remain evident. There needs to be evidence of progression towards 'entry' level competency along the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) at end-placement assessment when compared with mid-way COMPASS.

Final placement: To be awarded an ungraded pass for this placement you are expected to demonstrate 'Entry Level' competency *overall rating* on COMPASS® and 'Entry Level' practice skills across all COMPASS® Units. You will also need to be considered to have achieved competency across the Professional Standards for Speech Pathologists in Australia domains.

A range of placement supervision models may be used during these Stage 4 placements. Often it may be a paired placement of 2 students to 1-2 Practice Educators or a traditional model of 1 student to 1-2 Practice Educators. You will have gradually reduced levels of support and guidance across the placements. Towards the end of each placement, you should have a balance of supervised and non-supervised experiences. You should take independent responsibility for most aspects of speech pathology practice unless the situation is new or a number of features of the client and/or workplace combine to create complexity. You should be able to identify times when you continue to need support regarding areas of complexity or advanced practice.

Practice education organisation and expectations

ALLOCATION OF PRACTICE EDUCATION PLACEMENTS

The *Tasmania Placements Team* and the Practice Educator Coordinator manage the allocation of all MSpPath students to placements according to their practice education requirements. The practice education component of the Speech Pathology Practice units is required to meet Speech Pathology Australia's requirement for you to achieve competency across the three domains of the *Professional Standards for Speech Pathologists in Australia*. The Practice Education Coordinator monitors your progress towards meeting the required competency across the course.

To ensure equity of placement experiences and a coordinated approach to placement allocation, you cannot organise your own placements. Placement experiences are offered state-wide and students will be required, where necessary to travel and/or relocate for one or more placements during their course. Relocation and travel costs are the responsibility of the students. However, the [University Centre for Rural Health](#) does offer assistance to eligible students with accommodation in some rural areas.

You are required to make yourself available for the duration of your dates of placement. Both full-time and part-time students will be expected to be available on any weekday when placements are scheduled.

Periods of recreational leave cannot be accommodated during a placement. Do not plan holidays to take place during your placements.

Factors which *may* influence your placement allocation include:

- specific practice experiences you require across the lifespan (paediatric, adult) and across areas of practice (speech, language, swallowing, fluency, voice and multimodal communication);
- the availability of placements;
- your home/term address;
- your compliance status;
- your Learning Access Plan or Health Assessment form and family commitments;
- your preference for a particular placement or experience (in Stage 4 only).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

Attendance

The University of Tasmania has a 100% attendance expectation for practice education placements. Missing days of placement compromises competency development. Placement providers are not required to provide additional days and, in many circumstances, will be unable to offer additional placement days. This means that missed days may compromise your successful completion of the unit, as well as impacting client care, other students, and your placement provider.

Any absence, whether planned or unexpected, must be recorded. In the event of illness or circumstances resulting in absence, you must:

- notify your practice educator; and
- notify the Practice Education Coordinator.

If more than one day of a particular placement is missed then you must obtain documented evidence regarding the absence (e.g., Medical Certificate/s, Statutory Declaration explanation). This must be emailed to the Practice Education Coordinator as soon as practicable.

Depending on the situation, you may also need to complete an application for Special Circumstances consideration through discussion with the Practice Education Coordinator (see UTAS [Assessment and Results Procedure](#)).

Ethical and professional expectations

Throughout your practice education placements you must abide by Speech Pathology Australia's [Code of Ethics](#) (2020). There are some ethical issues that may arise during practice education:

- *Informed consent*: All clients and/or families should be informed when students are involved in any aspects of observation, assessment or management. In conjunction with your Practice Educator, you must obtain the client's consent to be assessed/treated by a student speech pathologist under supervision. To ensure

this consent is voluntary, it must be clear that their service will neither be affected nor disadvantaged by not consenting to be seen by a student.

- *Confidentiality:* Any information you obtain about a client, either verbally, from records or any other source, should not be disclosed to any other person without the express permission of the client concerned. This includes discussing clients with peers outside of the placement context. Client records should not be left unsecured (e.g. left unattended where they may be read by an unauthorised person) and should never be removed from the service location. If you use any information from clients in university assessment tasks (e.g. written case reports, progress notes, assessment forms, written reflections) you must ensure it has been completely de-identified (i.e. delete names, dates of birth, or other personal information of the client). You can use a pseudonym (noting that it is a pseudonym) and year of birth (e.g., Born in 2018, now 3;08 years of age). You will fail any assessment item if client confidentiality is breached.
- *Consent to record:* You may find it useful to record sessions to review within the clinic for the purposes of self-evaluation and reflection. You must always get express prior consent from your Practice Educator and client to record and follow the consent processes of the service provider. To respect your client's right to privacy, they must be fully aware that they are being audio or video recorded.

You must always demonstrate professional behaviour on placement. This includes your interactions with your clients and families, practice educator, other staff, and other students. Practice educators may expect you to do some pre-placement preparation so you should check what is required. You must become familiar with the policies and procedures of the service provider including consent, confidentiality and record keeping, mandatory reporting of abuse or neglect, infection control, and emergency procedures. While the practice educator retains medico-legal responsibility for the speech pathology management of the client, it is your responsibility to provide appropriate care in line with your level of experience and education. It is your responsibility to be thoroughly prepared for each session. You must demonstrate effective time management on placement and be punctual for specific appointments and to complete all commitments to clients and the service (e.g. reports, statistical records).

Safety in Practice Agreement and Mandatory Functional Requirements

All MSpPath students are required to establish and maintain their medical, physical and psychological capacity to practise safely. You are therefore required to declare your capacity to safely undertake [Mandatory Functional Requirements](#) (MFR) through your annual *Safety in Practice Agreement*.

Broadly, these requirements include capacity to read and write; to undertake critical thinking and reflective analysis; and to communicate. The MFR also include the psychological capacity to understand the importance of and demonstrate the professional attributes of honesty, integrity, critical judgement, insight and empathy; to interact in a caring, respectful manner; and to maintain self-control in professional situations. The MFR also specify requirements for physical capacity. You should read the details of these MFR requirements carefully before completing your *Safety in Practice Agreement*.

Other student responsibilities

You also have a responsibility to:

- contact your Practice Educator(s) at least two weeks prior to placement to introduce yourself and make arrangements for the first day and any pre-placement preparation
- prepare thoroughly for the placement
- provide speech pathology services under professional supervision and always act within your scope of practice
- follow the instructions and requests of your practice educator(s)
- take ownership of and manage your own learning
- identify and document learning goals and strategies for every placement
- recognise the limits of your knowledge and skills and proactively problem-solve, seeking support when needed
- reflect on your learning through regular self-assessment and reflective practice activities throughout the placement
- discuss your strengths and weaknesses with your practice educator(s) based on your own reflections and previous feedback provided during placement
- actively implement change in your professional practice based on reflection and feedback
- maintain your own health and safety while on placement
- proactively discuss any concerns or issues that may influence your performance during placement with the university Practice Education Coordinator.

Your rights while on placement

Throughout your practice education placements, you have a right to expect that:

- your Practice Educator will:
 - have appropriate qualifications
 - provide adequate orientation and pre-placement preparation
 - discuss and establish your learning goals for the placement with you
 - be responsible for managing their client service including the safety of clients, as well as student practice education within their workplace
 - be flexible, fair and consistent in values
 - facilitate your learning by modelling, guiding, and supporting you while encouraging independence by providing a level of supervision appropriate to your level of experience, knowledge, competence, and confidence
 - spend adequate time observing you and providing timely, balanced, independent, constructive and specific feedback across all aspects of performance
 - assess your speech pathology practice competency in an objective, independent, constructive and specific manner across all aspects of performance
 - treat you with respect and fairness

- communicate expectations and requirements
- support you to be yourself and develop your own practice and interaction style that is appropriate and effective within the context
- demonstrate good self-management and professionalism
- you can be assertive - but not passive, aggressive or demanding
- you can make mistakes without fear of retribution
- you can contact the Practice Education Coordinator if you have concerns about progress or the fairness with which you or others are being treated within the placement
 - this contact will be treated confidentially, and you will be advised of options for dealing with the situation either independently or with the involvement of the university
- you can contact the Academic Lead if you are concerned with how your progress is being managed by the Practice Education Coordinator
- you will be informed of any significant concerns that the Practice Educator may have about your progress and whether the Practice Education Coordinator has been contacted regarding these concerns.

UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITIES

The University of Tasmania has a responsibility to:

- plan, allocate and administer practice education placements that meet the requirements of the Speech Pathology Practice units and accreditation requirements for graduates
- manage the academic aspects of the MSpPath course to ensure you have the relevant theoretical knowledge and background experience required for the placement
- process your practice education placement COMPASS outcome and integrate it with the assessment for the relevant unit. Determination of final grade is the responsibility of the University in consultation with the Practice Educator
- provide appropriate cover through the University's insurances while you are involved in approved placement activities as a requirement of your course
- support you by:
 - ensuring communication access to the Practice Education Coordinator
 - facilitating access to academic and personal support services to maximise your ability to complete practice education placement requirements
- support Practice Educators supervising you by:
 - offering practice education workshops for educators interested in increasing their knowledge and skills in practice education
 - providing clear and comprehensive information regarding expectations and requirements for practice education
 - visiting placement sites as required or requested.
 - ensuring communication access to the Practice Education Coordinator

Preparing for Practice Education

TASMANIA PLACEMENTS TEAM

The Tasmania Placements team should be the first point of contact if you have questions regarding compliance requirements or other documentation for placement. The team can be contacted by email, phone, or in person during office hours. The best way to contact the office in the first instance is via email: Tasmania.Placements@utas.edu.au.

The Tasmania Placements team will email you to notify you about placement dates, contacts and other important placement related information. Please ensure your email address is current. You must update personal information such as phone/address/name etc via [eStudent](#) and this will update automatically into InPlace. It is expected that you will access your University of Tasmania student email account every day.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

You must complete the Professional Experience Placement (PEP) compliance requirements at the start of your course and ensure they remain current throughout the course. The compliance requirements are explained on the [PEP website](#). You must record completion of pre-placement requirements and upload all required documents to InPlace by the specified dates. In order to stay on track with eligibility for placement, it is vital that you regularly check both your university email and InPlace to monitor your compliance journey and ensure a timely response to any further requests from the PEP team.

If you have any queries about your immunisation forms, flu and COVID vaccinations please email the immunisation queries directly to: PEP.immunisation@utas.edu.au.

Student allocation to placement is based on meeting all necessary compliance requirements within required timeframes. Not meeting these timeframes will prevent you from attending placement and therefore affect your progression in the degree. Some placement providers may also require completion of additional compliance requirements in addition to those of the College and the School. You will be advised of any requirements prior to that placement commencing.

UNIFORM

The University of Tasmania speech pathology uniform is required for most placements. If the uniform is not required, smart-casual wear is expected. You must dress appropriately for the practice context you are attending and maintain a professional appearance. Your University of Tasmania Student ID (UTAS student photo ID card) must always be visible during placements. The PEP team will distribute a plastic sleeve and a pocket zinger to hold your student identification card prior to practice.

The speech pathology uniform is a short-sleeved navy polo shirt with the University of Tasmania logo. To purchase the uniform polo shirt, go to: <https://utas-health->

services.myshopify.com/ Password: leepia. The University of Tasmania fleece vest is optional. The polo shirt is worn with any navy blue or black trousers/pants or skirt that allows you to move comfortably and appropriately, and black closed-in flat shoes.

PREPARING FOR A PLACEMENT

You will be notified through InPlace of your placement allocation and some preliminary information. You should contact your Practice Educator(s) via email at least two weeks prior to your placement to introduce yourself and make arrangements to prepare for the placement. This initial contact is an opportunity to begin establishing a positive working alliance with your Practice Educator(s). The initial contact is a good opportunity to ask any questions you have about the placement. Some of the things you may need to clarify or discuss with your Practice Educator include:

- arrangements to meet the Practice Educator on the first day and expected work hours
- an overview of the client caseload or service delivery of the organisation
- any preparation required including any assessments/relevant texts/resources required
- any additional compliance requirements and confirmation that your compliance is current
- transport requirements (e.g., home visits undertaken)
- parking, public transport, location/access to service
- accommodation arrangements (where required)
- uniform or dress requirements
- communication expectations.

You should email your completed *pre-placement questionnaire* a few days before the placement starts so your Practice Educator is aware of your previous experiences and skills.

When you start a placement you should discuss with your Practice Educator a proposed timetable for the placement, including opportunities for observation, learning opportunities, and other activities including feedback, administration, planning, and liaison. You should also identify relevant organisational policies and procedures, and documentation and administrative requirements of the placement as early as possible.

In the first week of the placement, you will complete your *Practice Education Learning Goals Agreement*. This includes your agreed learning goals for the placement. This agreement can be adapted to meet your needs as well as those of the placement organisation and your Practice Educator.

A blank copy of the pre-placement questionnaire and a Learning Goals template are available on the Master of Speech Pathology MyLO site under 'Practice education information and resources'.

Practice Education assessment and support

COMPASS

Speech Pathology Australia has defined the knowledge, skills and attributes expected of a competent speech pathologist across the three domains of the Professional Standards for Speech Pathology in Australia (2020). Your progress toward Entry Level competency will be evaluated throughout each placement. Your Practice Educator must observe, assess, and give feedback on your performance. Your Practice Educator and you will both complete the placement assessment process at the mid-point and at the end of each placement. This process should be discussed with your Practice Educator as early as possible in the placement to define expectations and to facilitate the best learning experience.

Your speech pathology practice competencies will be assessed on placement using the Competency Assessment in Speech Pathology (COMPASS®) tool. An electronic copy of the COMPASS® Assessment Booklet and Resource Manual is available to you from the COMPASS Online portal. You should familiarise yourself with COMPASS® and the behavioural descriptors for Novice, Intermediate, and Entry Level students. You should be aware of the competency expectations for each placement.

The mid-placement rating is for the purposes of feedback and discussion (i.e., formative feedback), with the end-placement rating being used to establish Pass/Fail in the Speech Pathology Practice unit. The ratings of competence recorded at the mid-placement assessment provide an opportunity for qualitative assessment and early identification of areas of particular difficulty.

If your Practice Educator indicates at the mid-placement feedback that your competency development is below the level expected for your stage in the course, you must immediately arrange to meet with the Practice Education Coordinator. A learning contract will then be developed with you to address the most significant areas of concern.

You will usually demonstrate increasing competence on the COMPASS® competence scale over the placement. Sometimes you may move backwards from one placement to the next at the start of the new placement, due to the change in caseload mix and organisational requirements. If you or your Practice Educator are concerned that you are not progressing as expected, or are regressing during the placement, the University Practice Education Coordinator should be contacted.

The Practice Education Coordinator will finalise your COMPASS® practice assessment and use the resulting overall 'zone of competency' along with information from the Practice Educator and you about your progress through the placement to determine if the placement requirements have been satisfactorily met.

COMPASS® Online information

Your practice assessment will be completed using the COMPASS® Online tool. This is a secure system that only authorised University staff can access. You will receive an email

with details regarding your personal login for COMPASS® Online. Both the mid and end placement COMPASS® Assessments will occur using the Online system.

You will receive an email from COMPASS® Online when your details are uploaded onto the online database. This email will provide you with your COMPASS® Online username, and the password allocated to you by the system. DO NOT delete this email as you will use the same login throughout your placements in the course. You have the option to reset your password. If you lose your Username or Password, please follow the prompts on the COMPASS® Online log in page. The first time you login you will be asked to agree to the conditions of using the system.

When you access the COMPASS® Online system, you will be prompted to complete some student details. Please note that this information is confidential, and most fields are not mandatory. However, this information is useful when coordinating placement results and future placement allocations.

You will receive another email from COMPASS® Online when your placement information has been allocated. This email will contain information identifying your Practice Educator and the placement dates and provide a link to the COMPASS® Assessment for that placement.

You will complete a self-assessment using COMPASS® Online before meeting with your Practice Educator to discuss your progress at both mid placement and end placement assessments. This is important to develop self-evaluation, reflection, and learning, and is an integral component of the COMPASS® Assessment process. It is important to come to the meeting with your Practice Educator with evidence or specific examples to support your self-ratings.

When viewing the COMPASS® Online assessment template with your Practice Educator during your assessment, the upper green line is the student line, and the lower grey line is the Practice Educator line. This enables you to compare your Practice Educator's and your own perceptions of competency development. After the meeting, you are encouraged to review your learning goals for the placement and make any required changes to the goals you wish to achieve by the end of the placement.

You will be able to view your assessments for three months following submission. It is strongly advised that you print a copy of each assessment for future reference.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

You or the Practice Educator can request that the Practice Education Coordinator visit you on placement. The visit is not an assessment but is intended to provide an opportunity for observation and discussion between you, the Practice Educator, and university staff regarding your progress, your experiences, and university support available.

Most students enjoy and do well in their placements and establish a positive and reciprocal learning relationship with their Practice Educator. However, some students may be identified as not meeting the Practice Educator's expectations of competency relative to their stage of development and progression in the course. This can be a

challenging time for both students and Practice Educators and some people may experience strong emotional reactions or feel uncertain as to the best course of action. The student or Practice Educator should discuss their concerns and contact the Practice Education Coordinator to seek support as soon as concerns arise. A meeting can then be arranged to discuss concerns with student progress or professional behaviour within a placement. The goal of this meeting is to clarify the nature and significance of the concerns. The student, Practice Educator, and Practice Education Coordinator can then collaboratively develop an action plan. This planning provides the opportunity for the University staff to work with the student and the Practice Educator to develop learning goals, strategies and experiences, and access resources designed to assist the successful completion of the placement.

Additional experience required to achieve competency level

You may be granted an extension to your placement if you do not reach the required level of competence by the end of the planned placement time. This extension may happen if you are close to reaching competence, or there have been extenuating circumstances preventing the development of competency (e.g. student/educator health, or other circumstances covered by UTAS special consideration circumstances). Alternatively, there may be an opportunity for an additional placement period with a different organisation. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Academic Lead in conjunction with the Practice Education Coordinator taking all circumstances into account (including the availability of the practice educator/organisation to extend the placement).

Placement planning processes ensure the sourcing of suitable placements. If you require a placement outside of the standard course format, such as reattempting a placement, it is considered non-standard. Because these placements are not predictable and need to be specifically sourced, they can take longer to arrange and confirm. You may be required to complete these non-standard placements outside of standard university teaching semester periods. Your unit and course completion dates may be extended, and it is possible that you will not graduate with your cohort.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PLACEMENT

You may be withdrawn from PEP and/or have your commencement deferred, by the Manager, College Professional Experience Placement Safety in Practice, in consultation with the relevant Unit Coordinator in situations where:

- You have committed an act of misconduct as defined under the Student Behaviour and Conduct Ordinance and/or Student Academic Integrity Ordinance.
- Your behaviour has breached the professional conduct, discipline requirements or other rules of the professional experience placement provider.
- You are consistently unable, after due guidance and instruction, to perform at the required standard as assessed by supervising university or professional experience facilitators/preceptors.
- You have contravened professional experience placement rules.
- Your performance in practice is below a satisfactory standard in relation to the competency requirements.

- Your behaviour is disrupting other students, colleagues, or people in the practice setting.
- There is an increased risk of injury or misadventure involving you or others.

You must be withdrawn from placement via the College of Health and Medicine Professional Experience Placement Risk Management Process. If your placement is deferred and the period of deferral is of such length as to affect your academic progress, the Unit Coordinator shall:

- provide notice of the reasons for deferral in writing to you; and
- advise you of the requirements for satisfactory completion of the relevant unit.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING WHILE ON PLACEMENT

You are encouraged to develop and use self-care and mental wellbeing tools and strategies to manage yourself and your workload, particularly during high stress periods when on placements. You can proactively create a Self-Care Plan and identify sources of support through university [counselling and wellbeing support services](#) and your own circles of support (e.g., family, friends). You are also encouraged to use the self-reflection, self-assessment and goal-setting skills taught in the course to manage your health and wellbeing.

You are expected to take reasonable care to protect your own health and safety on placement by:

- following instructions, including training provided in health and safety workshops;
- complying with any occupational health and safety policies; and
- reporting any behaviour or situations that are hazardous to others.

In the event you are involved in an incident, accident or injury while on placement you must follow the incident/injury/accident reporting procedures within the particular workplace and ensure the incident/injury/accident has been reported as soon as practicable to the relevant supervisors and Practice Education Coordinator.

You must also complete a [University of Tasmania Online Incident Notification](#). When accessing the notification for the first time, you will need to login on the University 'Sign In' page, which will come up first. If you have any questions, please email health.safety@utas.edu.au. A staff member will assist you to complete this form as needed.

TRAVELLING TO PLACEMENTS

You should plan your travel arrangements well in advance of your placement dates and investigate all transport options. Mapping out the route, and if possible, having a trial run to the placement site can help reduce the stress of arriving on time for the first day.

You should check your placement provider location details through InPlace carefully.

The PEP website includes some useful tips for [travelling in rural areas](#).

Forms, Templates and Resources

MYLO TEMPLATES AND GUIDELINES

The Speech Pathology Practice Education information and Resources section on the MSpPath Course MyLO site includes useful and important forms and resources that you will need on placement. These include:

- Pre-placement questionnaire
- Learning Agreement and Goals template
- Reflection and feedback guide
- Practice hours and experiences form (your 'Practice experience map')
- Student Curriculum Vitae template
- Documentation templates and guidelines – management plans, session plans, progress notes (e.g. SOAP)

USEFUL PRACTICE EDUCATION REFERENCES

- Cook, K., Tillard, G., Wyles, C., Gerhard, D., Ormond, T., & McAuliffe, M. (2019). Assessing and developing the written reflective practice skills of speech-language pathology students. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 21(1), 46-55. doi:10.1080/17549507.2017.1374463
- Kenny, B., Davenport, R., Johnson, R.B. (2019) Speech-language Pathology students learning clinical reasoning. In Higgs, J., Jensen, G.M., Loftus, S., Christensen, N. (2019) *Clinical reasoning in the health professions* (4th ed). Elsevier

PRACTICE EDUCATION RESOURCES AND WEBSITES

- The [Speech Pathology Australia website](#) has many useful resources (e.g., Code of Ethics, Professional Standards, podcasts). Some of the resources are only available to SPA members (e.g., online education modules, Clinical Guidelines, Position Statements).
- COMPASS Online Portal - <https://compass.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/>

