University College Cork

– National University of Ireland, Cork

Student Placement Policy

Version 1.00

Student Placement Policy

Student Placement Policy

DEFINITIONS

This Policy governs the organisation and management of UCC Students going on Student Placements.

For the purposes of this Policy, the following <u>capitalised terms</u> (which are used throughout this Policy) shall have the following meanings in the context of this Policy:

Student Placement means:
The placement of a **UCC registered Student** with a third party for a period of time during their course of study which forms part of the accreditation award to the Student.   This includes:

   a.   Work/Project Based Placement means:

 A period of work/project experience with a third party, paid or unpaid, which is part of the Student's course and where the Student remains registered with UCC. The direct supervision of the Student's activities is the responsibility of the third party, and academic credit is given.

   b. *Educational Placement means***:**

A period of study at an institution other than UCC which is part of the Student's course and where the Student remains registered with UCC. The supervision of the Student is transferred to the host institution and UCC recognises the Student Placement for academic credit.

   c.   Work/Project Based Placement in UCC means:

A period of work/project experience at UCC itself, paid or unpaid, which is part of the Student's course, and where the Student remains registered with UCC. The direct supervision of the Student's activities is the responsibility of the unit within UCC where the Student is undertaking the Placement and academic credit is given.

Member of UCC means:
As per the Principal Statute, section A4, members of the University are defined as follows:

   i.   members of the Governing Body;
   ii.   members of the Academic Council;
   iii.   University's employees;
   iv.   University's Students;
   v.   University's graduates.

Any other person the Governing Body may appoint to be members. For the purposes of this Policy it also includes any volunteer, service provider or graduate member engaged in UCC arranged activity.

Placement Organisation means:

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The organisation with which the Student Placement occurs. During the Student Placement responsibility for the direct supervision of the Student is transferred to the Placement Organisation.

Policy means:
This Student Placement Policy.

University or UCC means:
University College Cork – National University of Ireland, Cork

Student means:
A Student registered with UCC.

Incident

An Incident is an event or occurrence that may have a negative impact on either a Student, the University, or a Placement Organisation. The negative impact may be physical, psychological and/or financial.

Critical Incident

A critical incident is an event, or the threat of such (within or outside Ireland), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. It is an event that causes individuals to experience a strong emotional reaction that interferes with their usual coping skills. The event has a level of trauma that is beyond the normal living experiences of those affected. The resulting stress reaction may include emotional, physical, behavioural and cognitive changes evident either at the time of the incident or later. The impact of a critical incident may affect any member of the University, not only those most directly involved.

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1 PURPOSE

At UCC, a large number of undergraduate and postgraduate courses have a Student Placement element. Student Placements give Students the opportunity to gain practical work and/or an independent learning experience relevant to their course as part of a Work/Project Based Placement or Educational Placement.

1.1 Aims and Objectives of the Student Placement Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the University's minimum required standards for the organisation and management of Student Placements as defined in page 3 of this Policy.

The Policy:

    a. sets a framework of clear and transparent processes for the organisation and management of Student Placements;
    b. sets out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in Student Placements;
    c. identifies the relevant procedures underpinning this Policy.

1.2 Insurance and Legal Requirements

The Policy is intended to ensure UCC's compliance with UCC's insurer's requirements and in particular the Irish Public Bodies Insurance's Step by Step Guide to Managing Risk on Third Level Student Placement. It is also intended to have regard to UCC's legal obligations in the context of Student Placements including the common law duty of care, Safety Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005, Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2008 and the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016.

1.3 Training for Members of UCC

Relevant and appropriate briefing sessions will be provided to those Members of UCC involved in the organisation and/or management of Student Placements to enable them to comply with the Policy. Each school will be required to identify the people who need training and ensure they attend the relevant training sessions.

2 SCOPE

2.1 Principles underpinning UCC's Student Placement Policy

The Policy is based on the following principles:

    a. UCC has a responsibility to its Students who are going on Student Placements to take reasonable care to ensure that they are provided with a safe environment for the duration of their Student Placement.
    b. This Policy applies to all UCC Students undertaking Student Placements.
    c. All legislation referred to in this Policy is Irish legislation. Where Student Placements are sourced and located abroad, the legislation of the host country will also apply.

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Failure of a UCC employee or Student to comply with this Policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal in the case of staff or expulsion in the case of Students, being taken in accordance with the University's disciplinary procedures (Principal Statute for staff)[1] and Student Disciplinary Procedure for Students[2] as amended or updated from time to time.

While this Policy does not apply specifically to placements that do not fall within the categories of placements covered by the definition of Student Placement on page 3 of this Policy, ; it is recommended to follow best practice as set out within this Policy and the underpinning procedures.

3   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This Policy sets out the responsibilities of Members of UCC in relation to the organisation and management of Student Placements.

Clear identification of roles and responsibilities will ensure the successful running of Student Placements and demonstrate that they are embedded in the culture of the University.

3.1   Registrar and Senior Vice-President Academic

The Registrar and Senior Vice-President Academic is the Senior Officer within UCC responsible for the Student Placement Policy. The responsibilities include:

a. ensuring that this Policy is reviewed, updated and approved by the University Management Team – Operation s (UMTO) as appropriate;
b. ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place to support this Policy;
c. liaising with UCC College/School/Department/Office(s) to ensure implementation of the Policy as appropriate;
d. ensuring that any breaches of the Policy are properly dealt with in accordance with the University statutes and rules.

3.2   Heads of College

The Heads of College are responsible for ensuring the Policy is implemented in their respective Colleges. The principal duties of the Heads of College are to:

a. maintain a list of nominated contact persons within their College/School/Unit with responsibility for organising and managing Student Placement matters within their own areas;
b. ensure their staff attend targeted training and briefing sessions as required;
c. have regular reviews of their college's adherence to the Student Placement Policy and procedures and ensure documentation is updated as appropriate.

3.3   Heads of School/Department & Staff

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1 https://www.ucc.ie/en/hr/policies/relations/

2 https://www.ucc.ie/en/students/policies/

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The Heads of School/Department are responsible for approving the Student Placement processes within their School/Department and ensuring they are implemented in line with this Policy. The Heads of School/Department must ensure an appropriate level of oversight of person(s) implementing this Policy on their behalf.

The Heads of School/Department must nominate a suitable staff member(s) for every programme which has an accredited Student Placement. The nominated staff member(s) will be responsible for coordinating compliance with this Policy within their respective area. Such matters include:

    a. being a point of contact regarding Student Placement for Students and Placement Organisations;

    b. ensuring satisfactory measures exist to ensure this Policy and its procedures are adhered to by his/her School/Department/Office;

    c. participating in training in Student Placement Policy and procedures.

3.4 Students

The Student is responsible for:

    a. attending mandatory briefing sessions provided by UCC;

    b. attending mandatory induction sessions provided by the Placement Organisation;

    c. advising UCC of any issues that may affect their ability to successfully complete their Placement;

    d. following the terms and conditions of their agreement(s) with the University and the Placement Organisation in relation to their Student Placement;

    e. adhering to the Placement Organisation's policies and procedures;

    f. contacting their nominated UCC representative at the agreed intervals.

Compliance with these responsibilities is mandatory for the Student. The Student will sign an agreement confirming they will comply with these responsibilities.

3.5 Placement Organisations

The Placement Organisation, in association with the University, is responsible for providing the Student with appropriate Student Placement activities to enable them to achieve their intended learning outcomes.

While reasonable efforts will be made by the University to facilitate Placement Organisations, failure on the part of Placement Organisations to co-operate with the University may lead to the cessation of current and future Student Placements in their organisation.

3.6 UMTO

UMTO are responsible for reviewing and approving this Policy (including updates) as recommended by the Registrar and Vice-President Academic.

3.7 Office of Corporate and Legal Affairs (OCLA)

OCLA is responsible for providing advice and guidance to Members of UCC on insurance, legal and risk management matters in relation to Student Placement.

4   STUDENT PLACEMENT MANAGEMENT

The key to success in Student Placement lies in the management of the relationships. There are three key relationships involved in Student Placements

    a.   University and Student;
    b.   University and Placement Organisation;
    c.   Student and Placement Organisation.

Each participant has an obligation to nurture and develop these relationships to ensure each Student Placement is a success.

For all Student Placements the following steps must be followed:

> **Step 1: Placement Organisation Risk Assessment**
>
> **Step 2: Pre-Placement Preparation of the Student**
>
> **Step 3: Monitoring and Communication during the Student Placement**
>
> **Step 4: Incident Handling**
>
> **Step 5: Feedback and Debrief Post-Placement**

4.1   Step 1: Placement Organisation Risk Assessment

In order to effectively manage risk associated with Student Placements, a documented up-to-date risk assessment should be in place for the Placement Organisation. This risk assessment must be taken into account and considered when assessing the appropriateness of a proposed Student Placement for a particular Student. A risk management plan should be prepared. The risk assessment should be undertaken in keeping with the UCC Risk Management Policy, the Student Placement Risk Assessment Procedure and UCC's Student Garda Vetting Policy (see section 5 below).

    a.   **Identify the Risks**

UCC and the Placement Organisation should contribute to the documented risk assessment. The Student should provide any information required to the person completing the risk assessment.

The following should be included when identifying the risks:

    a.   location of Student Placement;
    b.   nature of the work/ activities;

     c.   environment;
     d.   the Student;
     e.   the track record of the Placement Organisation.

   b.   **Assess the Risks**

For each risk identified, consider the current management controls implemented and determine if they are adequate or could be improved. Then assess the likelihood or frequency of any risk arising for UCC, the Student and the Placement Organisation. Next consider the impact and consequence of the risk if it does materialise.

   c.   **Manage the Risks**

For each risk identified, identify and implement the management controls to mitigate the risk. The four main ways to manage risk are:

     I.   treat;
     II.   transfer;
     III.   tolerate;
     IV.   terminate.

   d.   **Placement Approval**

Based on the risk assessment and management controls in place, the Head of School/Department will, having regard to UCC's Student Garda Vetting Policy, decide to either approve or not approve the Student Placement. The decision must be documented along with the reason for the decision.

4.2 Step 2: Pre-Placement Preparation of the Student

Appropriate written information and instruction should be provided to the Student prior to undertaking their Student Placement. When providing written advice/guidance to Students, written confirmation must be obtained from the Student that they have:

   a.   obtained the information;
   b.   read and understood it;
   c.   will comply with it;
   d.   will not bring the good name of either UCC or the Placement Organisation into disrepute.

Students shall be advised in writing that if they act in an unprofessional manner and/or fail to comply with the Placement Organisation's policies and procedures, then disciplinary action may be taken by the University and/or the Placement Organisation, which may result in dismissal from the Student Placement or the programme.

Preparation of the Student must be undertaken in keeping with the Pre-Placement Preparation of the Student procedure (see section 5 below).

4.3 Step 3: Monitoring and Communication during the Student Placement

During the Student Placement, there should be ongoing and regular three-way communication between the UCC contact person(e.g. the academic mentor) nominated by the Head of School/Department, the Placement Organisation and the Student. The Student Placement should be monitored by the UCC contact person to ensure the Student is achieving their learning objectives and to address any concerns or issues.

Monitoring of risks should be ongoing throughout the Student Placement and should be undertaken in keeping with the Monitoring and Communication during the Student Placement procedure (see section 5 below). All communication and attempts at communication must be documented as per Section 4.6.

4.4 Step 4: Critical Incident Handling

During the Student Placement, if a Student(s) is affected by a Critical Incident the Member of UCC managing the University response will carry out the following steps:

a. verify the information received;
b. establish the facts of the situation;
c. assess the risk;
d. communicate with third parties;
e. manage the ongoing situation;
f. deal with queries from the media or other external parties;
g. perform a post-incident review.

A critical incident report will be completed and distributed appropriate to the level of risk. All communications during the handling of the Incident must be documented. Critical Incident handling should be undertaken in keeping with the Critical Incident Handling procedure (see section 5 below).

4.5 Step 5: Feedback and Debrief Post-Placement

After completion of the Student Placement, Students and Placement Organisations should be required to provide feedback to the UCC contact person on their Student Placement experience. In light of the feedback a review of the Placement process and experience, including the risk assessment, should be carried out. The Student, UCC and the Placement Organisation should be involved in the review process. The review should be documented.

The risk assessment should be regularly reviewed and updated based on the feedback and debrief process.

4.6 Documentation / Recording

Documentation and recording of information must be completed throughout the entire Student Placement Process. This includes but is not limited to:

a. Placement Organisation risk assessment;
b. Student preparation sign-off;
c. agreement with the Placement Organisation(s);
d. any communications during the Student Placement;
e. any incidents arising;

    f.   Post-Placement review.

Data protection legislation should be considered and complied with during the whole Student Placement Process.

5   SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

The following procedures provide information or step-by-step instructions on how to implement the Student Placement Policy:

    a.   Placement Risk Assessment;
    b.   Preparation of Students Going on Student Placement;
    c.   Monitoring and Communication during Student Placement;
    d.   Critical Incident Handling.

The Policy should be read in conjunction with other University policies including UCC's:

    a.   risk management policy https://www.ucc.ie/en/ocla/risk/ ;
    b.   data protection policy https://www.ucc.ie/en/ocla/comp/data/dataprotection/ ;
    c.   child protection policy https://www.ucc.ie/en/ocla/policy/ ;
    d.   record management policy http://www.ucc.ie/en/ocla/policy/ ;
    e.   acceptable usage policy http://www.ucc.ie/en/it-policies/policies/ ;
    f.   social media policy http://www.ucc.ie/en/it-policies/policies/ ;
    g.   Student rules http://www.ucc.ie/en/students/policies/;
    h.   emergency management plan ;
    i.   Student Garda vetting policy www.ucc.ie/student**vetting** ;

This Policy supports the provision of a structure to assist in the University's discharge of its insurance and legal obligations where UCC Students are on a Student Placement. If you have any specific questions or concerns in relation to any matters pertaining to Student Placements generally, please contact the University's Registrar and Vice-President Academic office.

6   REVIEW

This Policy has been approved by UMTO. Any additions or amendments to this or related policies will be submitted by the Registrar to UMTO for approval or to whatever authority the UMTO may delegate this role.

The Policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Registrar and OCLA in light of the requirements of UCC's insurers and any legislative or other relevant developments.

7   FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any insurance or legal queries in relation to this Policy, please contact:

    OCLA

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8   DISCLAIMER

The University reserves the right to amend this Policy at any time in any manner in which the University sees fit at the absolute discretion of the University or the President of the University.

9   APPENDIX 1: UCC STUDENT PLACEMENT POLICY HIERARCHY

9.1.1   UCC Policy

A Policy is a formal statement of principle that explains statutory, regulatory or organisational requirements. It specifies the broad level of action required for a particular subject.

A reference to a Policy includes any attached schedule to that Policy. University staff, Students and contractors must comply with University Policy.

9.1.2   UCC Procedure

A Procedure is a statement that provides information or step-by-step instructions to implement a Policy.

A reference to a Procedure includes any attached schedule to that Procedure. University staff, Students and contractors must comply with University Procedures.

9.1.3   UCC Guideline

A Guideline is a statement that provides guidance to support the implementation of, and ongoing compliance with, a Policy or Procedure. It is an outline of good practice and supports the implementation of University Policy and procedures. It is recommended that all University staff, Students and contractors follow University Guidelines.
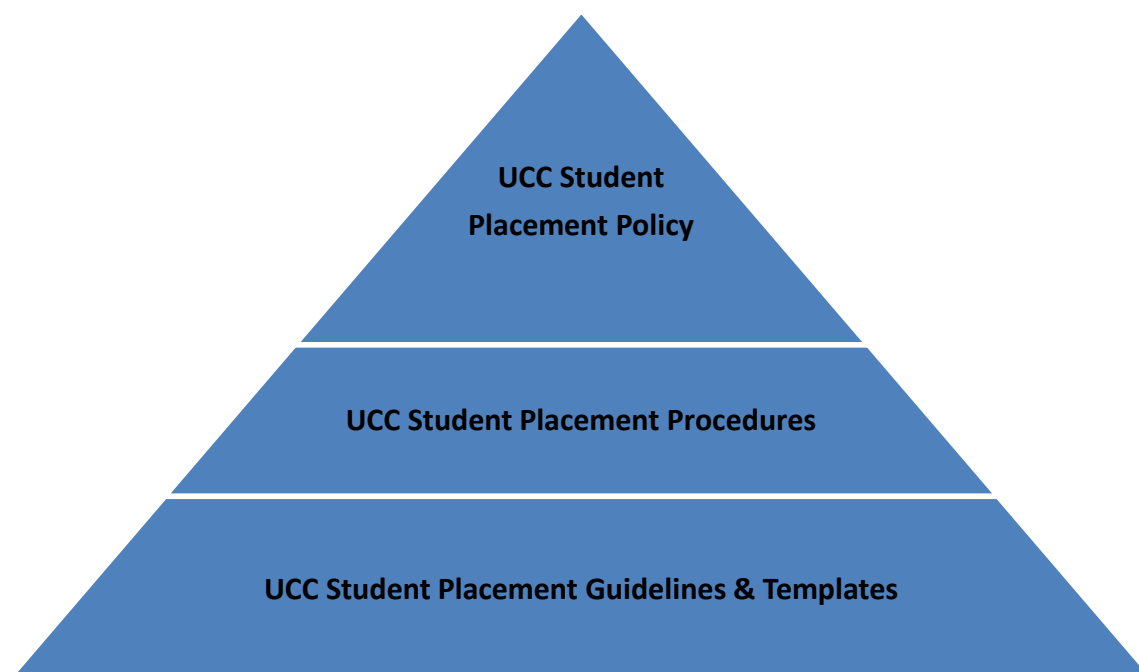

Figure 1: UCC Student Placement Hierarchy

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10 APPENDIX 2: DOCUMENT DETAILS

Revision History

Date of this revision: 21/04/2016	Date of next review:

Version Number/Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
0.1		
0.2	11/01/2016	Review with Nora Geary and Audrey Huggard
0.3	15/01/2016	Changes from Audrey Huggard
0.4	22/01/2016	Changes from policy sub-group meeting
0.5	08/02/2016	Changes from policy sub-group meeting
0.7	16/02/2016	Changes from Nora Geary and Audrey Huggard
0.8	02/03/2016	Changes from policy sub-group meeting
0.9	10/03/2016	Feedback from policy sub-group members
0.10	15/03/2016	Feedback from working group
0.11	18/04/2016	Changes re new Garda Vetting Act
0.12	21/04/2016	Changes from Steering Group meeting
1.00	27/09/2016	Approval from UMTO

Consultation History

Revision Number	Consultation Date	Names of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes
0.2			
0.3			

Approval

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Title	Date approved
Steering Group	Student Placement Steering Group	21st April 2016
UMTO	University Management Team (Operations)	13th September 2016

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Registrar and Corporate Secretary in light of any legislative or other relevant developments.