

School of Psychology
Counselling & Psychotherapy

Graduate Diploma and Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy

Placement Information Handbook 2023

Course Codes: CP082 and CP091

Course Names: Graduate Diploma and Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy

Degree: GradDipCounPsyth or MCounPsyth

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Welcome to the counselling and psychotherapy programs at the Cairnmillar Institute, where we have offered professional psychology, counselling and psychotherapy training for more than 60 years. This placement information handbook provides guidance for students undertaking both the Graduate Diploma and the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy. This degree will provide you with the opportunity to develop counselling skills by studying in a rich clinical context, at an Institute with a distinguished professional history of clinical excellence.

Counselling and Psychotherapy at the Cairnmillar Institute

The postgraduate counselling and psychotherapy programs at the Cairnmillar Institute are designed to assist students in acquiring knowledge, practice, and experience across a diverse range of areas relating to professional practice. This immersive, cohesive, and philosophically aligned program equips students with the necessary skills, and expertise to offer and ethically deliver effective counselling and psychotherapy.

Accreditation and graduate outcomes

This course is accredited by the [Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia \(PACFA\)](#) and the [Australian Counselling Association \(ACA\)](#) and constitutes the professional qualifications component of the requirements towards registration with [The Australian Register of Counsellors and Psychotherapists \(ARCAP\)](#). Students enrolled in our Counselling and Psychotherapy degrees are eligible to join the ACA and PACFA as student members at no cost.

Upon completion of the Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy, students will be eligible to Join PACFA as Certified Practising members and commence working towards clinical registration. More information on [PACFA membership and registration can be found here](#). Graduates of our Graduate Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy and of our Master Counselling and Psychotherapy are eligible for practicing memberships with ACA (Level 1 & Level 3, respectively). Graduates may find employment in a variety of settings including community health and community services organisations, agencies, rehabilitation providers, human resource management, child protection, family support counselling services, allied clinics and services, and private practice.

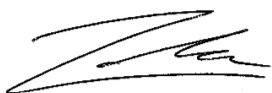
About this handbook

The Graduate Diploma and Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy course at Cairnmillar have two integrated components: coursework and supervised placements. This handbook focuses on the placement program and what is required to successfully obtain, undertake, and pass your placements. For details about coursework components, please see the [Course Information Handbook](#). It is the students' responsibility to read and understand the content of this handbook and refer to it as required.

Placement Contacts

- Placement Coordination Team Email: pc-cap@cairmillar.edu.au
- Placement Administration Team Email: placements@cairmillar.edu.au
- Phone: (03) 9813 3400

We hope that you enjoy the supportive and collegial environment at the Cairnmillar Institute and that professional training in clinical psychology with us is challenging, rewarding and enjoyable.



Zohar Berchik
Course Coordinator

1. PLACEMENT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1. Course Structure

To meet the requirements of both PACFA and the ACA for professional training, students are required to undertake and pass placement components. Table 1 shows the progressive structure of the Graduate Diploma and Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy. Refer to the relevant course handbooks for more information.

Table 1: Counselling and Psychotherapy Program Sequence (full-time)

Unit Code	Unit title	Credit Points
Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy (Year 1) / Graduate Diploma of Counselling and Psychotherapy		
Year 1, Semester 1		
CAP401	Psychotherapeutic Theories and Models	12.50
CAP402	Person-Centred Counselling	12.50
CAP412	Ethics and Professional Development	12.50
CAP417	Assessment Process in Counselling and Psychotherapy	12.50
Year 1, Semester 2		
CAP404	Facilitating Therapeutic Change	12.50
CAP405	Cognitive Behavioural Therapies	12.50
CAP414	Treatment Planning	12.50
CAP461	Counselling Placement 1*	12.50
<i>Graduate Diploma Total Credit Points</i>		100.00
Master of Counselling and Psychotherapy (Year 2)		
Year 2, Semester 1		
CAP509	Child and Family Therapy	12.50
CAP551	Research Methods and Project	12.50
CAP511	Interpersonal Processes in Psychotherapy	12.50
CAP561	Counselling Placement 2**	12.50
Year 2, Semester 2		
CAP510	Trauma, Loss and Grief Therapy	12.50
CAP507	Key Competencies in Brief Dynamic Psychotherapy	12.50
CAP505	Exploring Process Experiential Emotion Focused Therapy	12.50
CAP506	Existential Psychotherapy and the Group Process	12.50
<i>Master's Total Credit Points</i>		200.00

* CAP412 and CAP417 are prerequisites for CAP461 Counselling Placement 1

** CAP461 is a prerequisite for CAP561 Counselling Placement 2

Please note: Students studying part time are to arrange a study plan meeting with the Course Coordinator to establish the study sequence of their Masters' year (year 2).

1.2. Key features of the placement program

1. The placement program is designed to help students develop the valuable skills, confidence and integration of knowledge that can only be attained with experience in the field. In this unit students will develop the reflective practice skills required of counselling practitioners and experience the complexity of working in a counselling context with real clients, within an organisation. A counselling field placement is a supervised, industry-based immersive learning experience. The units offer you the opportunity to apply theory to practice in a real-world context and to develop your identity as a counselling professional. A field placement can also provide an opportunity to establish relationships in the counselling field and will support your application for registration with ARCAP.
2. The purpose of a counselling placement is to ensure students have appropriate opportunities to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the in-class components of this course to work with clients in a supervised professional context. The placement program is integrated with the classroom-based units, so that direct training in theory and skills precedes or occurs alongside placement experiences. Students will have opportunities to practice their skills while being supervised in a supportive and constructively critical environment.
3. Fitness to commence placement and placement allocations are decided on an individual basis to ensure the settings and client base meet the requirements of the accreditation rules for this course and that we meet our legal obligations pertaining to duty of care. Student preferences will be considered, however the final decision on placements will be made by the placement coordinator in consultation with the course coordinator and other relevant stakeholders. Choice of placement will be subject to availability. Any gaps or areas for development highlighted by the academic team and other accreditation requirements for graduation will also be considered. Cairnmillar expects students to embrace offers for placements that may be outside their areas of interest or comfort and/or outside of their indicated preferences when such opportunities are made available. This will ensure they gain supervised experience in areas most challenging to their practice and will support them in meeting the graduate competency requirements for completing the course.
4. While on placement the Cairnmillar Institute expects students to act within their area of competency as autonomous professionals and to develop their paths of expertise in counselling and psychotherapy and further develop their professional identity.
5. The placement program is designed with breadth in mind where students have experiences that prepare them for professional practice. Ideally, students will gain experience with a range of client presentations and settings across the lifespan (e.g., child, adolescent, adult, older adult), and employ a variety of clinical skills (e.g., intake, assessment, case-conceptualisation, treatment planning, risk assessment and response, management of case notes and conduct appropriate to professional clinical settings). In consultation with their placement coordinator, students must ensure that they have achieved an adequate breadth of experience across their placement program to meet the graduate professional competency requirements for the course.
6. It is common that students' ongoing professional development includes more intensive training in specific domains or therapeutic orientation once they have successfully completed the degree.
7. Students' placement experiences in this course will vary considerably and are arranged/approved in accordance with each student's skill, experience level, and professional interests. CMI and the Placement Coordinators act as facilitators of the individual student's program, and this handbook contains the guidelines and assessment requirements that provide structure for the placement program.

1.3. Placement Aims

The aim of placements is to provide students with the opportunity to:

- Learn about policies and procedures associated with working within an organisation in a field context.
- Gain experience with a wide range of clients of various presenting concerns and age ranges (possibly including children, adolescents and adults) in clinical settings.
- Apply and extend learnings attained from their coursework (such as: counselling theories, assessment, ethics, and case formulation, conceptualisation, planning and the use of treatment approaches) in a clinical setting with clients.
- Engage in various other related counselling and psychotherapy tasks with clients, including the writing and management of case notes and reports.
- Develop the professional conduct and collaborative teamwork expected of practitioners within community agencies, schools and other institutions.
- Develop their awareness of professional issues and available resources in mental health care in Australia (in community organisations, schools, medical and non-medical agencies).
- The opportunity to engage in reflective practice facilitated by a professional supervisor and develop their capacities as a reflective and reflexive practitioner.

Students must successfully complete all the requirements for placements set out by CMI and be deemed competent by their supervisors, agency representatives and the placement coordinator to successfully complete each placement.

1.4. Expectations of Students at Placement

Students on placement are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner as they would in a professional, paid work setting and as representatives of the Cairnmillar Institute. In this way students are expected to:

- Fulfill their contractual obligations with the placement agency regarding contract period for the placement and expected activities and behaviours
- Be punctual. This includes to work, client sessions, meetings and all professional appointments
- Be mindful of their role as a student practitioner in a development role (e.g., not a consultant)
- Be prompt and professional in all communications (e.g., in person, email, calls) including responding to people in a timely manner
- Read all relevant policies, procedures, and other documents, including workplace health and safety related material, and abide by the requirements set out in these documents
- Be respectful and not engage in conversations that are openly critical of the agency, its practices or people (staff, clients and associated parties)
- Make time to liaise with all staff they work with, including reception and support staff
- Tend to personal hygiene, dress in a professional manner and abide by any reasonable clothing requirements
- Maintain professional boundaries with their clients, supervisors and agency representatives and refrain from accepting gifts
- Actively seek out and/or offer to complete additional tasks during quiet times
- Refrain from making changes to your placement days or other agreed placement arrangements without prior consultation
- Behave in a manner that is aligned with the ethical code in place for the profession of counselling and psychotherapy and legal requirements
- Immediately report to their placement coordinator any safety concerns, barriers or impairments that impact on the student's ability to perform their duties on placement.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and that students will be assessed on their professional behaviour during their placement. Failure to meet these minimum standards may result in a referral to the Academic Integrity and Progress Committee and/or failure to pass their placement.

2. Placement Requirements

This section provides a detailed description of the placement program. More details about placements, and several important online resources can be found [here](#).

2.1. Pre-Placement Actions

1. **Email.** Ensure that your Cairnmillar email address is directed to the email address you view regularly. Email, including essential Canvas notifications, are the primary method used by Cairnmillar to communicate with students. [Click here for more information on my.CMI about accessing and configuring your email](#). Students are expected to check their student emails regularly and to respond to CMI emails within 2-3 working days.
2. **Pre-Placement Documents (Compliance).** Students need to upload a copy of the following documents to Canvas for each placement unit. These will be reviewed by the placement coordinator before you can start your placement. Students will need to ensure these actions are commenced at least 3 months prior to commencing their first placement to allow for any delays in processing. Students are responsible for ensuring their compliance checks are current while undertaking placements.
 - a. **Working with children's check (WWC).** You are required to obtain and maintain a current WWC while completing placements. Applications are state/territory based. [Click here for more information about obtaining and maintaining a valid WWC or equivalent](#).
 - b. **National Police Checks.** You will be required to obtain and maintain a current National Police Check on an annual basis while you are completing placements. [Click here for more information about obtaining and maintaining a valid police check](#).
 - c. **NDIS Worker Screening Check:** Some agencies will require students to obtain a NDIS worker screening check. Liaise with the placement coordinator about whether this is required, and the steps required to obtain the check.

2.2. Placement Hours and Days

Table 2 outlines the minimum placement hours required for each placement. The total time spent on placements is expected to be approximately 180 hours. It is expected that students will complete at least 40 hours of direct client contact and 30 hours of supervision (10 individual and 20 group). All placements should be undertaken at the rate of 1 day per week and take 17-20 placement weeks to complete.

Table 2: Minimum placement requirements

Counselling & Psychotherapy Placement Activities	Total Minimum Requirements for each placement unit (CAP461 and CAP561)
Total Placement/Practicum Hours	150 - 180 hours (approx., no min required)
Direct Client Contact (DCC) Hours (Counselling)	40
Client-related activities/hrs (excl. supervision & DCC)	80 - 110 (approx., no min required)
Total Supervision hours	30
Individual Supervision hours	10
Group Supervision hours	20

In line with placements being an opportunity to develop and apply counselling and psychotherapy skills, it is important that the structure of a placement centres on learning and developing competencies. For this reason, students in their first placement should attempt to slowly increase their client hours; this will allow students the opportunity to undertake work required outside of sessions to develop counselling and psychotherapy competencies.

Please note that these hours and activities constitute the *minimum* requirements. Progress is based on achieving competency across various counselling and psychotherapy domains.

2.3. Placement Activities: Definitions and Information

Placement activities are categorised as either direct client contact hours, client-related hours and professional/clinical supervision for their practice. A client may be an individual, a couple, a family or a group. There are minimum hours for some of these activities required for a placement to meet accreditation and training standards. It's important to understand what can and cannot be included as it pertains to counselling and psychotherapy courses and so students can correctly complete their logbook, which evidences the completed requirements.

Students are expected to closely monitor their placement requirements on a weekly basis in consultation with their supervisor, including the rate at which hours are being accrued across the various categories (e.g., direct client contact, client related contact, supervision etc.).

Students will be required to identify and report their logbook hours to date to their placement coordinator during the mid-placement review. Where the rate of accrual for hours is lower than expected, students are required to discuss potential solutions with their supervisor and/or placement contact prior to the mid-placement review meeting.

Please ensure you read and understand each of the definitions provided below as you will need to maintain an accurate logbook of approved placement activities.

Placement Activity Definitions:

- **Total Placement Hours:** Total placement hours = direct client hours + client related hours + supervision
- **Direct Client Contact (DCC):** Direct client contact is time spent working directly with clients face to face, telephone or teleconferencing. A client may be an individual, a couple, a family or a group in the context of counselling, Indigenous Healing Practices and/or psychotherapy provision. Direct client contact may be accrued during a session, intake, when providing feedback and any time spent providing care for clients.

Co-therapy: Up to 50% of the first 40 direct client contact hours can be accrued via co-therapy where a student is providing group therapy. After the initial 40 face-to-face client hours, other methods of client contact such as telephone counselling, online counselling using videoconferencing technology (audio and visual) or additional co-therapy are allowable. Co-therapy is where a student works with a trainer or qualified practitioner or another student in a dual capacity to provide psychotherapy or counselling at the same time with the same client or client group. Co-therapy can only be logged by the student as direct client contact when therapy is provided by trainees and not when it is also provided by a trainer or qualified practitioner.

- **Client Related Activity:** Client-related activities support students to acquire graduate competencies relevant to the counselling and psychotherapy courses and are distinct from direct client contact activities (though supportive of it) and may include those items listed below as examples.

Examples of Client Related Activities include but are not limited to:

- Administrative phone calls or meetings
- Reading/writing case/file notes
- Scoring assessments
- Writing reports
- Preparing for supervision related to client work
- Organisational projects
- Preparation of logbooks and placement forms
- External professional development that has been approved by the individual supervisor as meeting the student's learning goals

- Case presentations
 - Role plays
 - Practice sessions
 - Client observations
- **Supervision:** Supervision is a collaborative process which aims to support students to develop counselling and psychotherapy competencies. Supervisors of placement students also monitor and evaluate the student's competency development. Supervision focusses on both care of the client and the professional development and self-care of the supervisee.

Students are expected to proactively engage in supervision including preparing for supervision sessions, actively engaging during both individual and group supervision. This may include engaging/preparing case discussion, participating in role plays, demonstrating reflective practice etc. Supervision can be undertaken in individual and group format.

CMI typically sources supervisors for all students as part of the course. Students will receive a mixture of individual and group supervision. Prior to commencing placement, placement coordinators will introduce students and supervision via email. This process may vary such as where there is an agency requirement for onsite supervision by a suitably qualified member of staff who can provide the required supervision.

2.4. Preparing for Placement

2.4.1. Pre-placement workshops

Pre-placement training workshops will be conducted on campus 2-3 weeks prior to semester start. These mandatory workshops cover topics such as:

- Placement administration and process overview
- Family violence training, and
- Suicide risk assessment and intervention.

Workshop dates will be communicated via Canvas announcements. As these typically fall on the Semester breaks, students are advised to please check for scheduled workshop dates prior to booking any planned holidays.

2.4.2. Placement preferences and application processes

CMI arranges placement opportunities for students in the C&P course and the following information provides a brief overview about arranging a placement:

1. **Pre-Placement Meeting:** Book a pre-placement meeting with the placement coordinator via Canvas to discuss preferences for placement experiences. More information about these meetings, including how to book a meeting will be provided to students within Canvas.
2. **Prepare CV:** When requested by the placement coordinator, please email your CV to pc-cap@cairnmillar.edu.au. Please ensure that it is up to date and has a counselling focus. Prepare your CV with the following aspects in mind:
 - a. Remember that the reader will be a busy person and does not need an extensive description of the work you have done. Keep it brief and concise (e.g., no more than 2 pages).
 - b. Key headings can include contact details, current employment, voluntary work, employment history, qualifications, scholarships and awards, memberships of professional organisations, and training workshops attended.
3. **Placement allocations:** The placement coordinator will arrange placement opportunities for you according to the information and preferences you provided in the pre-placement interview. You will be emailed with this chosen placement agency and the next steps will depend on the individual agency (some will require an interview while others will simply start

with a meet and greet and begin the onboarding process). The placement coordinator will guide you through these steps.

2.4.3. Workplace Placements

Students may be approved to undertake a placement in their existing workplace (their place of employment) if the scope of the proposed role is consistent with developing counselling and psychotherapy competencies required for the course, and if the activities comprising the proposed role are sufficiently distinct from the student's usual workplace role (e.g., in a separate department, working with a different age cohort). If the placement is to be a paid placement, the financial arrangements are between the student and the organisation; the Cairnmillar Institute cannot advise on any financial arrangements included in this agreement.

All placements must meet the criteria for a suitable placement opportunity in counselling and psychotherapy in terms of the scope of work to be undertaken, diversity in counselling and psychotherapy placement experiences across the course and its ability to support the unit aims. They must be organised at least 8-10 weeks in advance of the first date of the semester to accommodate the extra time required for the establishment of appropriate contractual agreements and approved by the Course Coordinator. As the expectation is that students will be undertaking a structured learning opportunity, placements days, and expected caseloads should be clearly specified. It is expected that, whilst on placement, students will carry a smaller case load than they might ordinarily do whilst undertaking paid work (e.g., 2-4 clients daily) to allow for development opportunities, reflection, treatment planning and completion of placement requirements (e.g., logbook entries, case reports, supervision etc.).

Students undertaking paid or unpaid placements within their place of work must establish clear mutual understandings about what needs to be learned and how collegial/ managerial/ supervisory boundary issues will be negotiated. A [conflict of interest form](#) is required where students are known to the placement agency contact, the supervisors or where there are employment arrangements.

2.4.4. Supervision

Supervision is an important aspect of a student's placement experience, forming part of the minimum requirements for students on placement. The aim of each supervision session is to help the student develop their real-world case conceptualisation and counselling skills and the reflective practice required to offer an informed and competent service to their clients. Supervisors assist counsellors and psychotherapists to engage in reflective practice about the student's client caseload, explore and gain added awareness of their own "blind spots" and provide practical support and guidance in examining how to best approach and respond to tricky situations, ethical dilemmas and client concerns. Group supervision provides an added benefit of learning from the experience and reflections of peers.

In placement supervision, supervisors also have a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their students' clients and facilitating, monitoring and evaluating the student's competency development. Supervisors are responsible for helping students further develop their case formulation and conceptualisation abilities, reviewing students' case notes, signing logbooks etc. and more broadly, tracking their professional development and progress over the course of the placement. Students should expect to feel supported, guided and challenged in their supervisory relationship.

Students are expected to play a proactive role in supervision by:

- Preparing an agenda in consultation with the supervisor for each session
- Allowing sufficient time before each supervision session to review their work with clients as well as any unrelated challenges they face on placement, and to consider what they have achieved and what they may be concerned about.
- Preparing succinct initial case formulations to facilitate clarity and ask for guidance in the areas of greatest need.

- Being open to the feedback and guidance provided by their supervisors
- Come prepared having undertaken any activities or readings previously recommended by their supervisors.
- Engage in activities that support learning within the supervision session, such as participating in role plays.

2.4.5. Passing a Placement

It is the placement supervisor's role to regularly provide constructive feedback to the student throughout the placement regarding counselling and psychotherapy competencies. This feedback is formally provided at the Mid and End-Placement Review. In cases where students are not making the gains expected on placement, a plan will be developed at the Mid-Placement Review to support the student's placement progression and the placement coordinator will again attend the End of Placement Review. At the conclusion of the placement, the placement supervisor will make a recommendation to the Placement Coordinator as part of the End of Placement Review. Supervisors will indicate that student progress has been "Satisfactory" or "Not Satisfactory". When a supervisor's final report has been received by the Placement Coordinator, they will consider the supervisor's report, alongside the student's other submitted paperwork and assessment material (logbooks, journal, placement forms, case reports etc.), and a result will be recorded. The two possible results are *Pass* or *Fail*. Placements sometimes extend beyond the semester dates, and this may affect the recording of results.

If necessary, a referral to the CMI Academic Integrity and Progress Committee will be made by the Placement Coordinator, in consultation with the Course Coordinator.

At times students may find the transition from practicing as a counsellor or psychotherapist, often with extensive experience, to the student role a challenge. Successful completion of a placement may require changes in existing practice and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. The Course Coordinator and Placement Coordinator invite students to discuss any concerns or difficulties balancing existing practices with the development of new knowledge and skills.

3. PLACEMENT DOCUMENTS & ASSESSMENTS

Placements include assessments that demonstrate both clinical and professional skills. There are pre-placement requirements, placement assessment documents and clinical assessments that students need to ensure they have submitted to Canvas and had approved as completed by the placement coordinator.

3.1. Pre-Placement Requirements

Students are required to submit the pre-placement documents before each placement and cannot commence a placement before the placement coordinator has approved these assessments on Canvas. You can find detailed information about how to apply for each of the pre-placement requirements within your Canvas module and on my.CMI here: [Pre-Placement Documentation](#).

All students are required to submit the following to Canvas prior to commencing each placement:

- Police Check
- Working with Children Check
- NDIS Worker Screening Check (if applicable)

These must be kept valid throughout your placement so any renewals must also be uploaded as required. Failure to submit these assessment documents may jeopardise your placement and your opportunity to see clients.

3.1.1. Insurance

All psychological services provided by students are required to be covered by appropriate professional indemnity insurance (PII). Students enrolled in this course are covered under the Cairnmillar Institute's public liability and professional indemnity insurance policies when on external placement, fieldwork or other work undertaken in Australia in connection with a course or approved research work, with the knowledge and consent of the Cairnmillar Institute. It is important that students work on the specified placement days outlined in the placement agreement. Students who are undertaking placements in their workplace and who source their own placements need to be clear about which days are designated placement days, so they are covered by the appropriate insurance policy on those days. Students who mix their placements days, for instance while on a placement in their workplace, place themselves at risk of not being covered by the appropriate insurance.

Although Workcover cannot cover students, they are covered to the extent permitted by legislation, under the Cairnmillar Institute's Personal Accident and Travel Policy.

3.1.2. Immunisations

There are placement agencies that require students to have specific immunisation or coverage for certain diseases. Students will liaise with and provide evidence of vaccinations directly with the placement agency.

3.2. Overview of Assessment Requirements

Students also need to submit placement assessments to Canvas by the due date. These requirements are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Placement Assessments

Required Placement Documents	CAP461	CAP561
Placement Agreement (Form A)	1	1
Quality and Safety	1	1
Mid-Placement Review Meeting	1	1
Mid-Placement Review Form (Form B)	1	1
End of Placement Review Form (Form C)	1	1
Placement Logbook and Hours Summary	1	1
Required Unit Assessments		
Case Report	1	1
Supervisors Observations	1	1
Reflective Journal	1	1
Case Notes for Supervisor Review (Minimum)	6	6

3.3. Placement Documents

In addition to the pre-placement requirements, students must submit placement documents and unit assessment for each placement. You can find a complete list of all placement documents required [here](#).

Please read the instructions and requirements for each assessment and ensure that:

- Where applicable, the student signs all documents and ensures they are signed by supervisors/agency contact.
- Each assessment document is in PDF format.
- All instructions for each assessment are followed correctly, especially the logbook.
- Students retain their own copies of all placement documents.

Placement documentation completed incorrectly and/or outside of the required timeframe, may jeopardise a student's timely graduation or progression to subsequent units.

The following sections outline the required placement documents for each placement in this course.

3.3.1. Placement Contract (Form A)

The placement contract sets out the parameters for ensuring all parties are aware of their obligations and responsibilities throughout the placement and is signed by the student, supervisors and the placement contact/agency representative (where this is not the same as the supervisor).

Due date: Within 14 days from placement start date

This placement agreement contains the following details:

- Agreement between Cairnmillar, student and agency/school
- Confirmation of student placement information
- Guidelines for placement agency/school representative and or supervisor
- Guidelines for placement by students including the setup of learning goals
- Confidentiality agreement
- Supervision agreement
- The student's learning goals

Before the Form A meeting, students, in collaboration with their individual supervisor, will establish well-defined learning goals. This information enables the placement coordinator to ensure that placement goals meet the overall student learning needs. These learning goals should meaningfully reflect the student's overall developmental needs in relation to both the core competency areas and the context and opportunities relevant to each placement.

Please note: For safety reasons students cannot see clients outside standard business hours (e.g., after hours, weekends) without appropriate staff on site. Please ensure that you are clear about after hours and requirements for ensuring appropriate staff are onsite on placement days.

3.3.2. Placement Quality and Safety Checklist/OPSA form

Purpose: The quality and safety checklist/OPSA form is required to ensure students and the agencies are complying with workplace health and safety requirements.

Due Date: Within 14 days from placement start date

In line with APAC, effective processes must be in place to ensure students undertaking placements can practise competently and safely. The Quality and Safety Checklist and Off-Site Clinical Placement Activities (OPSA) form is in place to ensure all stakeholders are clear about their workplace health and safety obligations and responsibilities for delivering services off-site (where applicable).

3.3.3. Mid-Placement Review (Form B) Process

Purpose: A mid-placement review is required for all placements in this course and is designed to assess the student's progress towards graduate competencies and make any required adjustments to facilitate the students learning and development.

Due dates: Mid-placement review meeting: due within 6-8 weeks after the placement start date. The mid-placement review document (Form B) due by 7 days after the mid-placement review meeting.

Approximately 6-8 weeks after the placement start date, the student will arrange and attend a meeting with the supervisor, agency representative and placement coordinator (or suitably qualified delegate), to review the progress of the placement. Following this meeting the students will upload the completed mid-placement review form to Canvas. There are two aspects to the mid-placement review:

1. Mid-placement review form (Form B)

Supervisors are required to complete the mid-placement review form (Form B) and discuss this assessment and the student's progress with the student prior to the mid-placement

review meeting. The completed form should be verified and signed by the student, and supervisor then submitted to Canvas within 7 days after the meeting for the Placement Coordinator (or suitably qualified delegate) to finalise.

2. Mid-placement review meeting

A mid-placement review meeting is required to take place between the student, their clinical supervisor, the placement coordinator and, at times, the placement contact person/agency representative where the clinical supervisor is external to the organisation. This meeting needs to occur within two weeks of the mid-point of the placement. Students are responsible for arranging this meeting. Placement Coordinators will advise students via Canvas about how to book a mid-placement review meeting.

During the meeting the student, agency representative, clinical supervisor and placement coordinator (or suitably qualified delegate) will discuss the student's progress and decide on an outcome, and any action that needs to occur to help the student progress and meet their learning goals.

3.3.4. End-of-Placement Review (Form C) Process

Purpose: An end-of-placement review is required for all placements in this course and is designed to assess the student's progress towards graduate competencies and provide feedback about areas for further development in the next placement.

Due dates: End-of-placement review meeting: due within 2 weeks prior to the end date of placement and the end-of-placement review document (Form C) due by 7 days after the end date of placement.

Within the last two weeks of a placement, students will arrange and attend a meeting with the supervisor, and where indicated, also the placement coordinator, to review the progress of the placement. Following this meeting the students will upload the completed end-of-placement review form to Canvas. There are two aspects to the end-of-placement review:

1. End-of-placement review form (Form C)

Supervisors are required to complete the end-of-placement review form (Form C) and discuss this assessment and the student's progress with the student prior to or on collaboration with the student during the end-of-placement meeting. The completed form should be verified and signed by the student, and supervisor then submitted to Canvas within 7 days after the end of placement for the Placement Coordinator (or suitably qualified delegate) to finalise.

2. End-of-placement review meeting

An end-of-placement review meeting is required to take place between the student and their clinical supervisor, and where relevant the placement contact person/agency representative may also be invited to attend to contribute to reviewing the student's professional performance within the organisation. Placement Coordinators may also attend, and students will be advised if this is needed. This meeting needs to occur within two weeks prior to the end date of placement. Students are responsible for arranging this meeting.

During the meeting the student and clinical supervisor (and the agency representative and placement coordinator where relevant) will discuss the contents of the end-of-placement review form and the competencies. Students and supervisors should discuss any areas for improvement, and the student should seek the supervisor's feedback on how to further develop their clinical competencies. To support progression of competencies to the next stage, the EPR should be shared with the subsequent placement supervisor as a tool to assist with identifying relevant learning goals.

3.3.5. Placement Logbook (Form D.1) and hours summary

Purpose: The placement logbook is an essential record of all placement activities and is an accreditation requirement.

Due date: Students are required to have their logbook reviewed and signed by their supervisor fortnightly. Final placement logbook is due within 7 days from the end date of placement.

Students are required to maintain a logbook of hours representing the activities undertaken in a typical 7.5-hour day, noting basic client/activity details, the time spent undertaking them, and their reflections. All students will maintain one logbook per placement. These records are intended to reflect the placement learning goals, and to demonstrate that the student has met the placement requirements.

Information on how to complete the logbook can be found on Canvas and my.CMI. It is recommended that students familiarise themselves with how to process a logbook, as this can prove challenging depending on the level of Excel / computer skills.

Fortnightly sign off

Students are required to ensure they provide a PDF version of the placement logbook to their supervisors on a fortnightly basis. All supervisors that have provided supervision in that fortnight are required to endorse, by signed notation, that the logbook is a true reflection of each placement. Students maintain these fortnightly PDF versions of the signed logbook and collate at the end of placement to submit to Canvas. Further information on preparing the logbook for supervisor sign-off can be found on Canvas and my.CMI.

End of placement logbook submission

At the end of each placement unit, students must collate all signed PDF Logbook weeks with the hour summary page into one complete and final PDF logbook and submit to Canvas for the Placement Coordinator to finalise. Ensure the **Hour Summary Page** is included with final logbook, and all PDF weeks are signed and in date order. Please refer to my.CMI for more information.

The Cairnmillar Institute will retain copies of logbooks for the following purposes:

1. To demonstrate appropriate process if the Institute is audited.
2. To provide examples of student work during regular course renewal of accreditation.

Important: if you have a change of supervisor during a placement, you must make sure that the exiting supervisor has signed off on any logbook weeks before they leave. Any incoming supervisor is unable to verify activity they did not supervise, putting your logbook at risk of not being accepted as a true record of your placement hours and activity.

3.3.6. Reflective Journal (Form D.2)

Purpose: The reflective journal assists in students' development of self-awareness, self-reflection, and reflexivity.

Due date: Students are required to have their reflective journal reviewed and signed by their supervisor fortnightly alongside their logbooks.

Information on how to complete the reflective journal can be found on Canvas and my.CMI. It is recommended that students familiarise themselves with how to process the journal, as this can prove challenging depending on their level of Excel / computer skills.

Fortnightly sign off

Students are required to ensure they provide a PDF version of the reflective journal to their individual supervisor on a fortnightly basis. Further information on preparing the logbook for supervisor sign-off can be found on Canvas and my.CMI.

Important: If a student's placement has required a change of supervisor during a placement, students must make sure that any outstanding reflective journal entries are signed off by the exiting supervisor before they leave. An incoming supervisor cannot verify activity they have not supervised.

3.4. Placement Assessments

These assessments are activities undertaken on placement and assessed by the CMI-approved primary, individual supervisors. The following explains the requirements for each of these assessments and when they are required to be submitted.

3.4.1. Case Reports (All Placements)

Purpose: Case reports are required to assess students' competence in taking a complete history, conducting a full assessment, formulating the case, developing and implementing an intervention plan and monitoring the effectiveness.

Due dates: One case report is due in each placement. See Canvas for due dates for case reports.

Students must use clients in the current placement for the case reports and cannot use clients from previous placements or clients in work outside of placements. Students will require placement coordinator approval if case reports are based on clients not at the current placement.

Students must complete a comprehensive case report using the guidelines for writing a [Case Report](#) available on my.CMI. The placement coordinator (or delegate) will assess the case report and provide feedback via Canvas.

Please ensure that your case reports are deidentified and in pdf format before submitting them to Canvas.

3.4.2. Supervisor Observations (All Placements)

Purpose: Supervisor observations are required to assess multiple competencies related to delivering safe, appropriate, and professional counselling and psychotherapy services to clients and are important for students to strengthen their practice.

Due date: A minimum of one supervisor observation should be completed for each placement. It is recommended that this is completed and reviewed by your supervisor prior to the mid-placement review so that relevant feedback may be incorporated into your work for the remainder of the placement.

Students are required to have their clinical work directly observed by a supervisor on at least one separate occasion, for each placement (e.g., via co-therapy, video or audio recording, sitting in).

If the student's supervisor is not located onsite and cannot observe 'in vivo', direct observation may occur by way of secure video or audio-recording, with the client's consent. This confidential information is not required to be submitted to Cairnmillar.

Where the setting does not allow for the CMI-approved primary individual supervisor to observe the student in vivo or using video or audio recordings (such as in some forensic settings) students will need to seek approval from the placement coordinator for an alternate supervisor to undertake the supervisor observation. Alternate supervisors will need to liaise with the primary individual supervisor prior to giving the student feedback about the observation.

Students are required to:

- **Obtain informed consent from the client for supervisor observations** and if students need to video or audio record the client for the purpose of supervisor's observations, students must obtain written informed consent. Students can find consent forms for recordings [here](#).
- **Follow the CMI guidelines for the storage and sharing of video or audio recordings with their supervisor.** Students will be required to store the video or audio recording on their student OneDrive and share the link with their supervisors (supervisors do not need to have a CMI account to view the recording). You can find information [here about submitting supervisor observations](#) and [here about how to share a OneDrive link](#).

3.4.3. Supervisor reviews case notes (ALL Placements)

Purpose: Supervisors are required to review and sign off on a sample of client case notes for each placement. The purpose of this requirement is to provide the supervisor with evidence of record keeping and an opportunity to provide the student with feedback to strengthen case note content and format.

Due date: At least 3 case notes should be reviewed by the individual supervisor before the mid-placement review and a minimum of 3 (as required by the supervisor) before the end-of-placement review meeting.

Students are required to provide their CMI approved primary individual supervisor with a copy of case notes as requested by the supervisor for each placement. Where the supervisor is external to the placement agency, the student will be required to deidentify the case notes.

Supervisors will review the case notes and provide feedback to students about areas for improvement in case note form and content. Supervisors will indicate on the mid and end-of placement reviews that five case notes have been provided by the student and are satisfactory.

3.4.4. Obtaining Supervisor Signatures

Students are responsible for ensuring they obtain their supervisors' signatures on documents as outlined in this handbook. It is important that students do not use email when sending documents, unless the documents are deidentified. This is because email is not secure enough for sending health information according to privacy laws.

3.4.5. Student Evaluation of Placement

You will be invited to provide anonymous feedback on the Placement Units at the end of the year via survey link. The feedback you provide is extremely valuable and enables Cairnmillar to engage in continuous improvement of its services. We appreciate you taking the time to evaluate your placement experiences and provide feedback.

4. PLACEMENT PROGRAM POLICIES

4.1. PACFA and ACA Guidelines and Policies

Students in this course are expected to be familiar with and act in accordance with:

1. [PACFA policies and guidelines](#), including the ethical standards
2. [Code of Conduct for General Health Services](#) (VIC)
3. Placement agency specific policies and procedures
4. Privacy Laws

Please note that there are times where the student may be required to make disclosures, such as to meet mandatory reporting obligations. If you have a concern about needing to make a mandatory report, please discuss this with your supervisor, if this is appropriate. Alternatively, if this is not possible (e.g., the concern relates to the supervisor) please consult directly with the Placement Coordinator, Course Coordinator or Dean.

4.2. Roles & Responsibilities

Onsite Clinical Supervisor

When there is an on-site clinical supervisor at the placement agency, the on-site Clinical Supervisor is responsible for:

- Orienting students to the organisation (e.g., relevant staff members, equipment, physical environment, organisational policy and procedure, etc.)

- Clearly establishing the student's role within the organisation, including details of the work expected.
- Developing a relationship with the student that facilitates open discussion of difficulties and potential problems.
- Demonstrating a commitment to the supervision relationship (e.g., setting up a regular supervision time, supervision contract, and discussing with the student about his/her learning goals).
- Providing specific and detailed feedback on all aspects of the student's performance, including reviewing case notes and direct observation of the student (e.g., video or audio recording, co-therapy, sitting in.)
- Where possible, providing an opportunity for the student to observe the supervisor, and other staff.
- Reviewing and signing student's case notes and written works.
- Reviewing and signing student's placement activity logbook.
- Alerting the Placement Coordinator of any concerns regarding the student's performance at the placement agency.

External Supervisor

When there is no on-site clinical supervisor at the placement agency, the External Clinical Supervisor's is responsible for:

- Where possible, liaising with Agency Representative periodically about student's performance at the placement agency. The Placement Coordinator will also liaise with the Agency Representative periodically about student's performance and professional behaviours while on placement.
- Reviewing and signing student's case notes and written works.
- Reviewing and signing student's placement activity logbook.
- Providing specific and detailed feedback on all aspects of the student's performance, including reviewing case notes and direct observation of the student (e.g., video or audio recording, co-therapy, sitting in.)
- Alerting the Placement Coordinator of any concerns regarding the student's performance at the placement agency.

Agency Representative

When there is no on-site clinical supervisor at the placement agency, the Agency Representative is responsible for:

- Orienting students to the organisation (e.g., relevant staff members, equipment, physical environment, organisational policy and procedure, client and services provided, administrative procedures, emergency procedures and policies, introducing the students to staff etc.)
- Clearly establishing the student's role within the organisation, including details of the work expected.
- Developing a relationship with the student that facilitates open discussion of difficulties and potential problems and enabling the student to provide feedback about the placement.
- Ensuring the student receives suitable support when the representative is absent.
- Alerting the Placement Coordinator of any concerns regarding the student's performance at the placement agency.
- Allocating suitable clients for the student at the rate required for them to accrue hours required for the placement.

4.3. Changes to Placement

4.3.1. Student Absences and Leave

Any absence of days from the placement must be reported to the appropriate agency contact in the first instance and via email to your supervisor. Students are required to determine early in the placement who they are required to notify if they are absent from placement.

Unplanned absences for more than two weeks must be reported to the placement coordinator. An unplanned absence is an absence that was not planned when determining placement start and end dates.

Upon return to the placement the student should discuss with the agency representative/supervisor how any missed placement days will be made up. The outcome should be advised via email to the Placement Coordinator. Students who need to change their end date of placement due to absences need to follow the placement extension instructions below.

It is not recommended that students take annual leave while on placement unless this was planned and agreed as part of the placement agreement (Form A). However, in the event that a student needs to take annual leave they will be to discuss this with the agency at least four weeks in advance of the leave start date and apply via email to the placement coordinator.

4.3.2. Placement Extensions

Placements can only be extended under exceptional circumstances. All placements should have a clear start and end date as recorded on the original placement agreement. Students who need to extend placement need to discuss the potential extension and seek approval from their placement coordinator. Please refer to my.CMI for the full [placement extension application process](#).

4.3.3. Cancelling or rescheduling a supervision session

It is expected that both students and individual supervisors (CMI or external) observe common professional courtesies when changing or cancelling a supervision session. CMI requires that at least 24 hours' notice is provided by the student or supervisor to reschedule or cancel a supervision session. Exceptions apply where there are extenuating circumstances, such as emergencies.

Students with an external supervisor are required to discuss potential session cancellations when entering the supervision arrangement, as the student may become liable for a supervision fee directly billed to them by the external supervisor if they miss or cancel a session late.

Supervisors should discuss any planned absences and make suitable arrangements to ensure continuity of supervision. Please note that students must not continue placement without individual supervision for more than 2 weeks. It is important that students and supervisors have a clear understanding of who they can seek for urgent advice while on placement if their own supervisor is not available. If an agency cannot provide alternative appropriately qualified supervisor, the student should alert the placement coordinators and request interim supervision.

4.4. Confidentiality, Informed Consent and Record Keeping

You can access some general placement forms [here \(such as consent forms, etc.\)](#).

4.4.1. Confidentiality

Students are reminded that client information is confidential should be always discussed in a sensitive and respectful manner and only with appropriate people. Students are reminded that discussion of client information in open and/or public areas with staff or other students at their placement is inappropriate.

4.4.2. Informed Consent

The informed consent of a person must be sought before undertaking assessments or interventions with a person. A person gives informed consent if they:

- have capacity to give informed consent to the treatment or medical treatment proposed
- have been given adequate information to enable the person to make an informed decision
- have been given a reasonable opportunity to make the decision
- have given consent freely without undue pressure or coercion by any other person
- are able to freely communicate their decision in some form
- have not withdrawn consent or indicated any intention to withdraw consent.

The process of obtaining consent and any queries relating to the individual's capacity to consent should be discussed within supervision, and clearly documented within client case notes.

You are required to obtain written informed consent from a guardian or parent prior to providing psychological services to a child. Children aged 16 years or older can provide informed consent if the counsellor has assessed them as a mature minor.

Students should use the agency's informed consent process, however where there is no informed consent form, students can use the [CMI informed consent form](#).

4.4.3. Secure storage of client case notes and record keeping

Client case note secure storage

Client case notes created by students on placement must be stored in accordance with relevant state (e.g., the Victorian Health Records Act 2001) and national (e.g., the Privacy Act 1988) legislation. Prior to commencing placement, students, in liaison with the placement agency contact and their supervisor, must determine whether case notes can be stored with the placement agency. Where this is not possible it is mandatory that students store their case notes with the Cairnmillar Institute using their practice management software PracSuite. You can find more information about how to arrange access to PracSuite on my.CMI [here](#).

School Placements

School placement can pose some challenges in relation to sharing confidential information and this can pose problems with continuity of care and access to client notes for the child. Students will need to liaise with their supervisor, the school principal and placement coordinator about specific confidentiality requirements within a school setting and make appropriate and approved arrangements about continuity of care and information sharing.

4.5. Risk and Incident Management and Reporting

4.5.1. Risk Management

Students on placement are required to ensure they are aware of and follow the placement agency processes and procedures for managing clients who pose a risk of harm to self or others, and in accordance with their professional, ethical and legal obligations as a registered health professional. The following provides guidance about risk management processes and further support for students who encounter situations where risk management is required.

Step 1: Conduct a risk assessment to self and/or risk of harm to others. Take appropriate further action and document your risk management approach/plan.

Step 2: Contact your supervisor to discuss the risk assessment and management of the client. If your supervisor is unavailable then contact appropriate agency staff (i.e., clinic director, placement contact if a counsellor or psychologist) for assistance and support to manage the risk. If the

appropriate agency staff are unavailable to support students on placement or take crises counselling, then contact the Cairnmillar Institute in the following sequence.

Step 3 (where applicable): Call CMI reception on (03) 9813 3400 and make it clear to the receptionist that the matter is an urgent risk matter, the receptionist will triage your call to an appropriately qualified Cairnmillar staff member.

If out of hours or reception is unavailable, contact individual staff members in sequence as follows:

1. Placement Coordinator: Jodie Arnot 0414 288 434
2. Course Coordinator: Zohar Berchik 0425 851 188
3. Dean: Linda Byrne 0416 166 277

To ensure student safety on placement, students who escalate a risk management situation to the Cairnmillar Institute for support (Step 3) are required to make a critical incident report within 24 hours of the incident. You can find more information about critical incidents below, including a link to the report form.

4.5.2. Critical Incidents

Cairnmillar has a [critical incident policy](#) together with procedures that cover the action to be taken in the event of a critical incident, required follow-up to the incident, and records of the incident and action taken. The critical incident policies ensure the interests of students are managed appropriately. Such policies also ensure Cairnmillar are prepared for such incidents and have a clear protocol to follow in what can be distressing and upsetting circumstances.

To ensure that ongoing support is provided to a student in need, and that records of the incident are maintained, the following procedures apply.

A critical incident is a traumatic event, which may cause significant physical and/or emotional distress involving Cairnmillar staff and or its students. A traumatic event could include:

1. missing students
2. any fatality or serious injury
3. a serious traffic collision
4. homicide or suicide
5. verbal or psychological aggression
6. serious clinical incident
7. fire
8. explosion or bomb threat
9. a hold up or attempted robbery
10. serious threats of violence.

If a critical incident occurs, students must report the critical incident to the appropriate agency and CMI placement staff immediately and if located outside the agency (e.g., clinic, school) then you must advise the agency as soon as reasonably practicable that an incident has occurred. Following a critical incident students must complete and submit the critical incident report form to hr@cairmillar.org.au and the course coordinator (zohar.berchik@cairmillar.edu.au) within 24 hours of the incident.

4.5.3. Debriefing

Following a critical incident or a stressful or adverse clinical event, students should take measures to debrief with their supervisor or other appropriate placement agency staff. Students who do not have the opportunity to debrief due to unavailability of agency staff can contact CMI staff as per the sequence of contacts listed under in the risk management section above.

4.6. CMI Support Services

The following services are available to students:

- **Counselling & Support for Students:** Please refer to '[Counselling for Students](#)' on my.CMI
- **Academic & Writing Support for Students:** Please refer to '[English and Academic Writing Support](#)' and '[APA Support and Study Skills](#)' on my.CMI
- **Other Support Services:** A searchable list of other support services can be found on my.CMI. See: [Support for Students](#)

4.7. Grievance Policy

Please refer to the [Student Grievance Policy and Procedure](#) in addition to the following information. Should students have a concern or grievance regarding any aspect of their placement, they should communicate this to their CMI placement supervisor or the placement coordinator where the supervisor is external to CMI in the first instance. The supervisor or coordinator will discuss the student's concerns and will collaborate with the student to determine the most appropriate course of action.

If the student's concern or grievance is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, or if the student is unable to discuss the matter with their supervisor or placement coordinator the student should contact the Course Coordinator. At this point the student will be asked to complete and submit a formal grievance which will be responded to in writing.

- **Course Coordinator:** Zohar Berchik | Phone (03) 9813-3400 or email zohar.berchik@cairnmillar.edu.au
- **Placement Coordinator (C&P):** Phone (03) 9813-3400 or email pc-cap@cairnmillar.edu.au

If the student's concern or grievance is still not resolved to the student's satisfaction, or if the student is unable to discuss the matter with a Course Coordinator, the student should then contact the Dean.

- **Dean:** Linda Byrne | Phone (03) 9813-3400 or email dean@cairnmillar.edu.au

If the student's concern or grievance is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student may then take their concerns to an external body. The appropriate body will be determined by the nature of the complaint. Students can access further information by first visiting: <https://www.studyassist.gov.au/support-while-you-study/higher-education-student-complaints>