Professional Experience Practice (PEP) Clinical Facilitator Handbook

2025

UniSC

Contents

Welcome to the School of Health

On behalf of the School of Health at UniSC, we would like to welcome you as a member of our team. The school offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate nursing programs and has a growing number of students involved in higher degrees by research.

UniSC has a presence at the Sunshine Coast, Gympie, Fraser Coast, Moreton Bay, and Caboolture campuses. Students from the Bachelor of Nursing Science and Bachelor of Nursing Science (Graduate Entry) who are enrolled in the Sippy Downs campus also enrol in some classes conducted from the Sunshine Coast Health Institute (SCHI) co-located with the Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

We welcome you as colleagues and valued resource persons for our students. Our goal is to establish and maintain a close working relationship with you throughout the year and we urge you to use us as mentors and resource persons, especially if this is your first experience with UniSC.

UniSC program structures

The School of Health offers the following nursing programs (please follow links):

Bachelor of Nursing Science (BNursSc)

Bachelor of Nursing Science (Graduate Entry) (BNursScGE)

Emails to university staff should include a subject line with course code, student name and ID number.

Nursing Clinical Placement team

Area	Contact details	What would I contact the team for?
Nursing Placements Office	Email: nursingplacements@usc.edu.au Nursing Phone: 5456 5005	- General clinical placement enquiries - Placement groups & allocation - Roster enquiries - Sonia Support/IT issues - Make-up/Completion of Hours - Student absences (illness/covid/incident)
Fit for Placement Office	Email: FFPO@usc.edu.au Phone: 5456 5487	Mandatory pre-clinical requirements

Academic support

Nursing Area	Contact details	What would I contact the team for?
Associate Clinical Educator Team	Email: ace@usc.edu.au	- Initial triage of learning and teaching issues on placement - CF support and education - Support for UniSC policies and ANMAC guidelines - Provision of CF inductions, workshops & upskilling sessions - Facility visits
Course Coordinator	Email Direct (information found on Sonia)	- Learning & teaching - Behaviour, clinical practice, and scope of practice issues - Student wellbeing safety concerns
Professor and Head of Nursing Discipline Stephen Neville	Phone: 07 5548 6317 Email: sneville2@usc.edu.au	
Program Coordinator, PEP Matt Mason	Phone: 07 5456 5159 Email: mmason1@usc.edu.au	- Sources new clinical partners - Site concerns - Academic Liaison International Students

Student resources

Please contact ACE/CC in the first instance

Area	Contact details	• What would I contact the team for?
Student Central	studentcentral@usc.edu.au 5430 2890 Visit on campus	• Course advice and Program Progression • Enrolments
Student Wellbeing	StudentWellbeing@usc.edu.au 5430 1226 Book an appointment via Student Hub	• Support for health and wellbeing • Supporting self-guided resource groups and student-led programs • Free counselling
SafeUniSC	security@usc.edu.au 5430 1168	• Emergency response and immediate assistance • First Aid • Safety escorts & building access on UniSC campuses • Safezone App support
Safer Communities	safe@usc.edu.au Book a call back on the Student Hub Complete an online form	• Contact for student who may be experiencing bullying / harassment / discrimination • Refer to the Safer Communities webpage for more information on harmful behaviour. for more information on harmful behaviour.
Tenancy and Welfare	Please contact the course co-ordinator	• Please view the information available on the Student Wellbeing web page.
Student Guild	Please view the information available on the Student Guild web page	• Support includes student advocacy, welfare, legal and tenancy advice, foodbank and community kitchen, subsidised haircuts, social activities, student clubs and societies.

Contact outside of business hours

If you have an emergency on placement **outside of business hours (between 4.30pm to 8am**

Monday to Friday, weekends, and during the campus closure – 25 December–2 January) please call

SafeUniSC on 07 5430 1168. They will be able to triage your call to the appropriate services. Please

do not ring this number for absences from placement.

If you are in a life-threatening emergency, you should call police or ambulance on 000.

The Clinical Facilitator

A clinical facilitator is a Registered Nurse, involved in current nursing practice, who is engaged to facilitate student learning in a clinical setting. Your primary role is to support, guide and assess student learning throughout their clinical placement. As a clinical facilitator, you represent the School of Health and your employer (if not directly employed by UniSC). It is expected that you will set a high standard of professionalism as an educator, a registered nurse and as an advocate for UniSC. To role model these positive attributes, we expect that you:

- Wear the UniSC clinical facilitators uniform and university identification (UniSC employed staff)
- Communicate effectively and in a timely manner with all key people including staff (clinical and UniSC) and students.
- Work according to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia's Registered Nurse Standards.
- Hold current Australian Registration as a Registered Nurse, a current National Criminal History Certificate, and have Queensland Health mandatory immunisations up to date and have completed a UniSC Verification Form. Please upload these documents to your Sonia Online profile.
- Understand the UniSC Workplace Learning and Industry Placement Policy and Procedures available at this link: https://www.USC.edu.au/about/policies-and-procedures/work-integrated-learning-placement-procedures.

Learning about clinical facilitation and assessment

Please attend one of our UniSC Clinical Facilitator Workshops. For UniSC employed nursing clinical facilitators this is an ANMAC requirement that you attend annually and strongly recommended for all other CFs employed by our clinical partners. The workshops are delivered by our Associate Clinical Educators at various times a year (depending on the region). Except for our rural and remote regions, these CF workshops will be delivered in a face-to-face mode. For additional information please contact the Course Coordinator for the courses you are working in. At the workshop the Course Coordinators will be available for questions.

Clinical facilitators work an eight-hour day (excluding mealtimes). Unless you have been previously approved by the Discipline Lead, you will be required to be onsite at all times when students are there. The Professional Experience Practice (PEP) involves a range of different shifts. Depending on the facility, your roster may be given to you in advance, prior to the placement group commencing, or arranged around the shift times of your students. Assessments of students using UniSC approved

assessment tools must be undertaken face to face with students, within the clinical facilitator's hours, and within the allocated placement dates of the student.

Clinical Facilitator Responsibilities

One week prior to placement

As a clinical facilitator, you are expected to prepare for student PEP prior to the commencement of the clinical experience, including attendance at health facility inductions (as necessary), developing links with clinical staff and unit policies. Once you are allocated your group of students, your role is to manage their integration into the nursing team.

You will be supplied with a 'username' and 'password' to the Sonia Online – Work Integrated Learning System (Sonia Online). The names and email addresses of your students will be allocated to you via the Sonia Online system. You will also need to plan the following:

- If you do not work at the facility, before the students start, make yourself known to key facility staff (eg, nurse unit manager, nurse educator). It is recommended that you visit the facility prior to your first day to introduce yourself. Topics to address are:
  - Your role
  - When you and the students will begin
  - The level of student and expected scope of practice
  - The focus of their learning during the PEP
  - How they can find information on what students can and cannot do
  - How they can contact you when needed
  - How many students will be in your area at a time
  - The days students will be there

- Participate in your health care facility induction (if not undertaken previously).

- Know where unit and health care facility policies and procedures are to be found and be familiar with these and those that students must become familiar with.

- Contact students via email, one week prior to orientation day, to introduce yourself. Include location that students should meet you on the first day (and time) and any access information (eg, security codes/restricted access, parking etc).

- Organise orientation prior to commencement, where directed.

- Most organisations engaged by the UniSC already have an established orientation format and online eLearning packages. If not, you will need to plan and conduct a facility and placement orientation for the first day of the PEP. You may need to book space ahead of time and confirm with the facility their specific requirements.

- Involve health care facility staff in planning the orientation – who should students know, what should they know and who should they ask?

Identify and include those procedures and policies that relate to client safety, occupational health and safety and workplace behaviour.

First day of placement

On the first day of the PEP your role is to:

- Ensure an orientation to the facility is provided.

- Ensure you know when and where you are to meet the students.

- Advise them of the best places to park.

- Ensure that each student knows how to contact you
    - Obtain next of kin information from students in case of emergency
    - Provide students with information about how to report absences to yourself and the clinical area.
- Involve the staff on issues such as OH&S, access to clinical records.
- Provide facility with own documentation if requested.
- View students' pre-clinical documentation on the first day and show to the facility manager if requested. The UniSC preclinical mandatory checks are available on Sonia Online or the link. If a student does not have these, please contact the Course Coordinator/Associate Clinical Educator for your course.
- Some facilities may also have their own mandatory requirements that need to be completed prior to commencement of the PEP. If you have any concerns, contact the Fit for Placement Office.

- Conduct a tour of the agency/facility:
    - Ensure students know where the bathrooms are.
    - Show them where they can find refreshments and the hours of operation.
    - Show them where they will be having their debrief sessions.

- Show them the departments they will need to find as a student (X-ray, pharmacy, laboratory, ED).

- Familiarise the student/s with their unit:
  - Ensure students know the location of bathrooms.
  - Show them where they can leave their personal possessions.
  - Let them find specific items such as: the emergency exits; evacuation assembly areas; emergency bells; fire alarms; firefighting equipment; protocols for an emergency; utility room; pan room etc. Most facilities/wards will already have a seek and find process set up for students. Note most facilities will conduct the fire safety checks and manual handling with students.

- Introduce the student/s to the NUM and RN/EN/AIN/PCs.

- Provide the students with specific learning activities to prepare them for the following day, such as:
  - Meeting the staff they will work with.
  - Meeting the client/s they will be caring for.
  - Becoming familiar with the documentation used.
  - Discussing the CICO process with the staff.
  - Location of patient/client medical record and how to access them.
  - Reviewing or researching the client's medical condition/surgical conditions.
  - Reading the care plan/clinical pathway and becoming familiar with the procedures to be undertaken.
  - Preparing a plan of action for the following day.
  - Becoming familiar with the equipment to be used the following shift.
  - Arrange an initial interview time with each student where you will learn a little about them.
  - At initial interview go over the ANSAT feedback tool with the student and what they need to do to complete their requirements. This tool is designed to promote progressive feedback and to assist the student develop critical thinking skills.

Example email to students

Please modify for facility, latest covid advice, first day instructions etc.

Welcome to your nursing placement at *insert facility*.

My name is ******, and I will be your Clinical Facilitator while you are here. I will be available throughout your entire placement. My contact details are ***insert email/number. There is a lot to learn and a few important things to note before you get here.

Firstly, I suggest you take a drive and locate the facility and parking before your first day. Your first day on site is **** insert date. Make sure you arrive early and prepared. i.e., **7.45am for an 8am start.** I will meet you at the main reception. Your roster will be sent to you/access on Sonia. You will find this under the placements tab in Sonia. Locate your placement details. It is under site documents.

Things to bring every day:

Please have **all your mandatory pre-clinical documentation** (as per the portfolio) with you. I'm afraid I will have to send you home if you do not bring this documentation.

Water bottle.

Although there is a café onsite the opening hours are limited therefore, I suggest you bring your own snacks and lunch.

I recommend that you bring a small spiral bound pocket-sized notebook and pen every day.

If anyone owns a stethoscope and manual sphygmomanometer (blood pressure cuff) please bring these every day.

We will be accessing Canvas and Sonia as well as looking things up online.
Please note there are no secure lockers for your bags, I cannot guarantee the safety of your electronic devices or belongings. Make sure you keep your wallet & phone on your person.

I will go through workplace allocation and daily routine at orientation.

Looking forward to meeting you all soon.

Example first day orientation

*Meet students outside of facility for Covid procedures prior to entering

Time	Agenda
0800-0930	1. Check pre-placement requirements 2. Introductions 3. Discuss sick leave process, punctuality, and uniform—refer students to Sonia for the Clinical Placement Manual 4. Discuss CF role and expectations 5. Discuss outline of assessments for clinical placement (i.e., Progressive halfway, Summative at completion) 6. Discuss CICO and SMART goals 7. Obtain ID badges
0930-0945	Break
0945-1200	1. Introduction from facility administration 2. Discussion of Covid precautions 3. Presentation of facility policies 4. Education on Elder Abuse with quiz 5. Hand Hygiene exercise 6. Tour facility—meet staff
1230-1300	Lunch
1300-1330	1. General Evacuation Instructions/Fire Safety
1330-1400	2. PPE Skills Session
1400-1600	3. Manual Handling
1600-1630	4. Fill out facility evaluations and return 5. General group debrief
1630	Orientation completed
	On an individual basis over tomorrow's shift and the next ensure the following is addressed with each student: 1. Get to know the student individually and address any concerns 2. Reiterate goals and learning objectives, CICO, and the assessment process 3. Access to the role of CF as advocate, facilitator, assessor and how to contact 4. Opportunities for debriefing—individual using CICO process with CF and buddy 5. Seeking learning opportunities and optimizing experiences—taking accountability and ownership

Facilitator ongoing learning opportunities

You are required to facilitate ongoing learning opportunities for the student by:

- Conducting a risk assessment each day in relation to student/s in collaboration with relevant nurse managers by assessing the clinical environment to ensure that appropriate staffing is available to provide support for learning and ensuring students are allocated to work with and supervised by a registered nurse. Please report to the course coordinator early if there are issues identified.

- Assisting clinicians to understand the learning needs of students.

- Assisting students to appreciate the roles and contribution of the interdisciplinary health care team. Please provide a focus on this in your debrief with students.

- Referring to the Check In/Check Out (CICO) information in Appendix 1 to guide the student's learning goals and discuss learning for the day.

- It is important to spend clinical time with each student. During the student's placement, it is beneficial to work with them for a block time of 2 to 4 hours where possible.

- Matching students with their level of experience, skills, and knowledge to clients to assist in the provision of their care.

- Linking students with a clinical buddy relevant to their facility/year level (eg 1st year – PC/AIN, 2nd and 3rd year – RN/EN) and who is prepared to oversee the care that the student provides to clients in your absence.

- Negotiating learning opportunities for students within their scope of practice (see Clinical Practice Framework via Sonia) and educational ability in collaboration with clinical staff.

- Checking throughout the day with the student and the clinical buddy regarding the student's activities and abilities.

- Planning for students working the evening shift if you are not present for the whole shift or if you are starting later than the students the following day. Organise in collaboration with the NUM or team leader, a client/RN mix for the student for the evening/morning. When the student arrives for the practicum, have them prepare for the shift by undertaking the research on the client/s and the care required for the shift, then if they are to be present the following morning, ensure that they understand their morning responsibilities. You should meet with the

evening RN buddy to ensure that they are comfortable with the allocation and the roles of the student. **Students cannot be on a placement site if there is no RN present.**

- Assisting students to understand and appreciate how the theory and foundational skills they have learned can be applied in the clinical environment.

- Providing guidance in the performance of clinical skills, especially when undertaken for the first time. The students have access to a range of demonstration videos on Sonia, please encourage the use of these [Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine Demonstration videos.pdf (usc.edu.au)](usc.edu.au).

- Being alerted to learning opportunities in the clinical environment that will enhance the achievement of the students' learning outcomes.

- Encouraging students to share their CICO/clinical learning objectives with staff.

- Ensuring that each student understands their role on the day and the activities they are responsible for in relation to client assessment and care.

- Assisting students to embrace all learning opportunities.

- Conducting a debrief session with students to identify concerns and issues that need to be addressed. Usually for first year students, debrief would be held daily/every second day, twice a week for 2nd and 3rd year students (depending on their clinical location).

- Encouraging students to be critical thinkers and encourage them to demonstrate clinical reasoning.

IMPORTANT: Giving students timely constructive feedback verbally as well as documented in a letter format to the student on Sonia is important. Discuss their performance and information on how they can improve their performance if required. Provide actions or supportive strategies for the students.

Student absences

All students need to account for their hours on placement. For nursing students this is done on the Sonia timesheet. Students are responsible for updating the timesheet daily and at the end of their placement you will need to review the timesheet for accuracy and sign/action it (See Appendix for tip sheets).

If a student is absent for any period, it is their responsibility to upload the supporting evidence (medical certificate, stat dec) to their Sonia timesheet/attendance form. Medical certificates must be correct in their details and dates those students are fit for placement or unfit for placement. Students cannot return to placement without a valid clearance. It is the student's responsibility to contact you if they are absent for a day. If your student does not arrive, has not contacted you, and you are unable to contact them; you must contact Nursing Placements in the first instance by phone on 07 5456 5005 then by email nursingplacement@usc.edu.au ; this is to ensure that the student is safe.

Any leave of absence must be reported to the Nursing Placements and Course Coordinator, or the Associate Clinical Educator, in the first instance via email and then by phone if necessary.

If completion of hours is required, it would be appreciated if the facilitator could endeavour to assist the student to complete these hours during their allocated placement dates in accordance with the policies and procedures of both the facility and UniSC. Additional hours should be recorded in Sonia Online using the timesheet. If hours are to be completed outside of the allocated placement, these must be organised by the UniSC Placement Office.

Please stress to students that a minimum 800 PEP hours must be completed to meet the requirements of the nursing programs. In each individual course, students must complete the required hours of placement before a final grade can be awarded.

Completion of required clinical placement hours

In each clinical course, you must complete the required hours of placement before a final grade can be awarded. The placement office will allocate your clinical placement. You must complete all required hours, and all rostered shifts (for the full shift), for each clinical course to successfully complete the course requirements.

If you are required to complete your placement hours at a different location or with a different clinical facilitator, please be aware that you will still be assessed according to the Standards for Practice and the expectation is for students to continue to meet the Standards. In these circumstances, your Summative ANSAT may have been signed by your previous clinical facilitator, but your grade will be finalised by your course coordinator at the completion of your hours.
To facilitate appropriate assessment and completion of hours where the hours cannot be completed in the current placement the following guidelines are applied:

Requirements for completion of clinical hours

Outstanding hours	Action required	
	ANSAT finalised, and no learning plan required	**ANSAT not finalised, or learning plan required**
<u>**Less**</u> **than 24 hours** For courses: NUR141 NUR117 NUR227 NUR287 NUR304	• Where a student is returning to the **same facility**, they are required to complete their remaining clinical hours only (ensuring that they attend full shifts) • Where a student is attending a **new facility**, they will be required to complete a **minimum of 16 hours**. This is to facilitate orientation on first day and a full shift of clinical practice. • If the student is unable to return to placement within 4 weeks, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice.	• If a student requires a **Summative ANSAT**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice • If a student requires a **Learning Plan**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice
<u>**More**</u> **than 24 hours** For courses: NUR141 NUR117 NUR227 NUR287 NUR304	• Regardless of if the student has been to the facility or not, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice.	• If a student requires a **Summative ANSAT**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice • If a student requires a **Learning Plan**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice
	NUR300: ANSAT finalised, and no learning plan required	**NUR300: ANSAT not finalised, or learning plan required**

Less than 24 hours For courses: NUR300	• Where a student is returning to the **same facility**, they are required to complete their remaining clinical hours only (ensuring that they attend full shifts) • Where a student is attending a **new facility**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice. • If the student is unable to return to placement within 4 weeks, they are required to complete a **minimum of 80 hours** to ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice.	• If a student is returning to the **same facility**, and require a **Summative ANSAT**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice • If a student is returning to the **same facility**, and require a Learning Plan, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice • Where student is attending a **new facility** and they require a **summative ANSAT**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 80 hours**. • Where a student is attending **a new facility** and require a **learning plan,** they are required to complete a **minimum of 80 hours**.
More than 24 hours For courses: NUR300	• Regardless of if the student has been to the facility or not, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice. • If the student is unable to return to placement within 4 weeks, they are required to complete a **minimum of 80 hours** to ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice.	• If a student is returning to the **same facility,** and require a **Summative ANSAT**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice • If a student is returning to the **same facility**, and require a **Learning Plan**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 40 hours** to facilitate final assessment and ensure that they are adapting to the new clinical environment (if applicable) and meeting the scope of practice • Where student is attending a **new facility** and they require a **summative ANSAT**, they are required to complete a **minimum of 80 hours**.

		• Where a student is attending **a new facility** and require a **learning plan,** they are required to complete a **minimum of 80 hours**.

One make-up placement is offered, and the hours need to be completed. Approved absences as per normal processes may require rebooking. If there are no valid reasons for not attending, the student is considered to have failed the course based on incomplete hours and no further placement hours will be booked.

Covid-19

When a student tests positive, the clinical facilitator needs to advise the Fit for Placement office and Nursing Placements team (ffpo@usc.edu.au and nursingplacements@usc.edu.au). The student must electronically submit a 'WIL COVID-19 Reporting Form' which is a self-selectable form in Sonia Online. The student must upload a photo of their positive result via the COVID-19 Reporting Form. Students who test positive cannot attend placement until clearance is granted and should be sent home immediately following a positive result.

Incident reporting

Clinical facilitators are responsible for completing incident reports in the event of any incident for example, a needle stick injury, cutting finger on a vial, syncope.

All incidents must be reported on the day of incident by the facilitator in the first instance, using the following link https://www.usc.edu.au/connect/work-at-usc/health-safety-and-wellbeing/report-a-near-miss-hazard-or-incident. The student would only complete the form if the facilitator were not present within the facility on the day of the incident.

Contact outside of business hours

If a student has an emergency on placement **outside of business hours (between 1630hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday, weekends, and during the campus closure – 24 December–2 January)** please call SafeUniSC on 07 5430 1168. They will be able to triage your call to the appropriate services. Students are not to ring this number for absences from placement. If a student is in a life-threatening emergency, they are advised they should call police or ambulance on 000.

Clinical Placement Attendance Form and Completion of Hours form – Sonia Online

The **Clinical Placement Attendance** and **Completion of Hours** form (attendance form for make-up) for students is now completed as a Sonia form. UniSC staff will add the form to every student record, for each placement. To view and action Attendance forms, please follow the steps available in here.

References:

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care 2017, National safety and quality health service standards, 2nd edn, viewed 14 January 2019, https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/National-Safety-and-Quality-Health-Service-Standards-second-edition.pdf.

Care Quality and Safety Commission 2021, Aged Care Quality Standards, viewed 7th March 2022, myagedcare.gov.au/aged-care-quality-standards , #quality-st

Felton, A & Royal, J 2015, 'Skills for nursing practice: development of clinical skills in pre-registration nurse education', *Nurse Education in Practice*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 38-43. Doi: 10.1016/j.nepr.2014.11.009.

Henderson, A, Harrison, P, Rowe, J, Edwards, S, Barnes, M, Henderson, S & Henderson, A 2018, 'Students take the lead for learning in practice: a process for building self-efficacy into undergraduate nursing education', *Nurse Education in Practice*, vol. 31, pp. 14 – 19.

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia 2016, Registered nurse standards for practice, viewed 14 January 2019, https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes- Guidelines-Statements/Professional-standards/registered-nurse-standards-for-practice.aspx

Check In/Check Out Process

Checking in and checking out (briefing and debriefing) are integral components of the learning process. Checking in requires students to prepare for their clinical practice experience and checking out assists students to reflect on their experience, gain feedback and rate their confidence at the end of the clinical encounter. The Check In/Check Out process has been designed to promote student engagement and accountability for learning (Henderson et al. 2018).

Students use the CICO in their preparation for practice courses where they are accountable for preparing prior to attending class and they arrive in class reading to set goals for their learning. At the end of the class, they identify if they met their goals and what they still need to do for further learning. Example videos of this process can be viewed here Check In - Exemplar in Simulation Ward (usc.edu.au) and Check Out - Exemplar in Simulation Ward (usc.edu.au).

The CICO process is also required in clinical practice where a discussion is held with students by the RN buddy or clinical facilitator at the commencement of their shift about their learning goals and then a short conversation is held at the end of the day to establish if goals were met and what further learning students identify that they need. This is not an assessed activity, but it is required for students to take accountability for their learning.
A clinical reflection session is student-focused time to reflect on learning experienced in the clinical environment. It is a time where students collaboratively share their knowledge and learn from others' experiences. It is an expectation of UniSC that a joint debrief session is held most days of the clinical practicum experience. Students and facilitators will be using the Check In and Check Out (CICO) Process.

The clinical reflection session venue needs to be in a room that is private (so that client data can be shared in confidence) and large enough for the group of students.

It is suggested that a reflection session is conducted on the first day to alleviate any anxiety and respond to any questions. A reflection session should take approx 30 minutes – 1 hour.

ENGAGING IN TEACHING & LEARNING IN A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING SPACE

A FACTSHEET ON THE CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT PROCESS FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE SPACES.

The Check-in and Check-out (CICO) process supports high quality, engaging and relevant education in clinical practice spaces. The CICO process focuses on collaborative learning spaces where students engage as partners in their learning with teaching staff in clinical laboratories, simulation suites and clinical practicum. The CICO elements complement the course content, skills assessed, and clinical practice within all clinical courses.

The expectations of teaching staff and students in collaborative learning spaces is informed by the USC Student Charter. The course co-ordinator and teaching staff are responsible for all aspects of a clinical course delivery. Students are expected to actively engage with the course requirements and learning resources to successfully complete a clinical course. In a collaborative learning space students are active partners with teaching staff in clinical learning activities.

Check-in (briefing) prior to, or upon entry to, the collaborative learning space requires a student to prepare for their clinical practice experience. The Check-in questions are addressed at the commencement of a clinical practice session.

Check-out (debriefing/student confidence) supports activities for a student to gain feedback which:

- reinforces positive aspects of the learning experience
- encourages reflective thinking
- supports thinking to link theory to practice and research
- encourages critical thinking
- supports discussion about professional practice

The student is required to rate their confidence on four statements at the completion of each clinical practice session:
- I can safely perform the clinical practice
- I can identify positive examples of clinical practice role-modelling
- I can identify feedback received that helped me achieve my learning objective/s
- I have confidence to initiate and independently perform the clinical practice

The confidence statements support a student to acknowledge their accomplishments, learning experience and how they felt about their learning. This information finally encourages a student to answer the "take home" questions - **Have I learnt what I need to know? If not, what do I still need to do?**

THE CICO PROCESS

CHECK-IN

1. What will I be doing today?
2. What are my questions before starting today?
3. What are my learning goals?
4. What am I learning about today?

CHECK-OUT

1. What did I see?
2. What did I do?
3. What was I told?
4. How do I feel?

★★★★☆
RATE YOUR CONFIDENCE

TAKE HOME QUESTIONS

1. Have I learnt what I need to know?
2. If not, what do I still need to do?

For further information, please contact Amanda Henderson on AHender1@usc.edu.au.

Assessing clinical learning

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia [(NMBA) Registered Nurse Standards for Practice](#) for Practice underpin all student assessment in the clinical environment. The School of Health has adopted the validated [Australian Nursing Standards Assessment Tool (ANSAT)](#) to provide Progressive and Summative assessments as well as Informal feedback. Only Registered Nurses can assess nursing students using the ANSAT.

The clinical assessment is undertaken in Sonia Online (UniSC's online platform). On Sonia Online you will view the student's self-appraisal using the assessment tool and you will document their Progressive and Summative assessment. Only UniSC assessment tools are to be used.

Prior to the assessment, a facilitator should:

- Become familiar with the clinical assessment using the Australian Nursing Standards Assessment Tool (ANSAT) and the learning outcomes to be achieved in this placement.
- Discuss the expectations of the course and the ANSAT Tool with the student to share a common understanding.
- Understand the Behavioural Cues ([HERE](#)) that could comprise evidence of each criterion.
- Formulate some ideas on cues that might be evidence of achievement of the outcomes/ objectives and validate these with the course coordinators.
- Contact the Associate Clinical Educator/Course Coordinator if there are any concerns regarding students. Refer to the Clinical Learning Flowchart under 'Process for Students at Risk'.
- Gather evidence of clinical performance throughout the days before the assessment. Sources of evidence may include:
  - Observation of student performance.
  - Audit of documents such as care plans and progress notes to which the student has contributed.
  - Discussions with the student.
  - Interviewing staff whom the student has worked alongside.
  - Speaking with patients the student is caring for.
  - Speaking to the RN buddies who have supported the student.
- Organise a time to discuss the assessment with the student.
- Ensure the student has completed their ANSAT in Sonia Online prior to the meeting.
- On the day of the assessment, ensure that the student has told their RN buddy that they will be absent for about 30 minutes (for the assessment).
- Organise a private place to conduct the assessment. This may be an office, vacant patient room or garden area where discussions will not be overheard.

When undertaking the assessment

A clinical facilitator should:

- Encourage the student to express how they feel they have progressed to date.
- Offer encouragement and promote confidence in the student.
- Assess the student against the [Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia's (NMBA) Practice Standards for the Registered Nurse and Midwife](#).
- Use the ANSAT domains and Behavioural Cues for feedback. Allow the student to self-evaluate against the evidence provided.
- If a student does not agree with any aspect, ask them to explain how their self-evaluation differs from that written.

Progressive assessment

You will complete a Clinical Facilitator Progressive Assessment ANSAT for the student at the time of the assessment which is usually conducted halfway through a placement. This provides the student with formal feedback regarding their progress to date.

- Prior to scheduled assessment meeting time, the student is to complete the Student Self-evaluation Progressive ANSAT. The student will score themselves according to how they believe they are performing in relation to the Standards of Practice. Each standard is scored between 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (proficient).

For the progressive assessment at the mid-way mark, there are four reflective questions the student needs to complete to assist in the discussion/assessment. These questions are designed to enable the student to engage in the mid-placement feedback interview process most effectively, by developing the strategies of reflection, self-assessment and utilising constructive feedback. These questions include:

1. What is going well and what have you learnt so far?
2. Is there anything that continues to challenge you?
3. How will you improve upon or develop your practice further?
4. How would you demonstrate your engagement with the interprofessional team and/or professionals from other disciplines during this placement?

During your meeting discuss the student's reflection and goals they have set for the remainder of their placement. Areas of practice the student should focus on for the remainder of the placement are recorded on the progressive assessment tool. Utilise this time to offer constructive feedback and to praise achievements. Suggest strategies or actions that the student can use to work towards increasing their clinical practice confidence and competence. Where there are aspects that may be strengthened with time and opportunities to practise, advise the student of such and document. Where a student is scoring less than 3 on the ANSAT provide specific clinical examples under the *most relevant standard*. Also provide written strategies and actions that the student can

implement to improve identified areas of clinical performance. Discuss this immediately with the Associate Clinical Educator/Course Coordinator as a learning plan may need to be implemented. Complete the ANSAT on Sonia Online. Please access the Clinical Facilitators Guide to ANSAT in Sonia Online for further instructions if required. Ensure the student brings their phone or laptop with them so they can action the form before they leave the meeting. There will be occasions where students in the clinical environment are considered to be 'at risk' either as a result of performance deficits or because of personal, emotional or physical limitations. If you have concerns about providing feedback in these situations you can contact the Associate Clinical Educators or the Course Coordinator for advice.

When communicating Student Performance Issues:

- Clearly define the behaviour/issue.

- Use a copy of the Behavioural Cues to assist your conversation.

- Clarify the expected standard using NMBA practice standards.

- Identify the discrepancies between the standard and observed behaviour.

- Listen to the student's explanation.

- Recommend strategies and actions to achieve required standard.

- Document conversation in Sonia Online and inform student that they can view the documentation and respond.

- If you have any doubts/concerns/questions regarding the students' performance on placement (however minimal), communicate immediately with the Associate Clinical Educator or the Course Coordinator.

Example Sonia documentation ***This is just one style as an example. It does not have to be too lengthy. It is just so the student has some written, as well as verbal, communication***

Dear (student name),
Thank you for meeting with me yesterday/this morning/this afternoon. As we discussed, the areas you are demonstrating strengths are:
*You can dot point these
*Example: professional communication with patients and staff

The areas requiring improvement to meet the ANSAT standards are:
*You can dot point these
*Time management: (give clinical example), Yesterday on shift, you… *insert example*.

Moving forward, to help you succeed in these areas, please ensure you….
*Dot point strategies here.
* Example: Please utilise the shift planner…

I am looking forward to working with you again (insert when/how often).
Warmest regards

Escalation process for student support

During clinical placement, nursing students are working towards consistently and satisfactorily demonstrating the Registered Nurse Standards of Practice for their given year level. Occasionally, students may require additional assistance to be successful. This document provides guidance for assessing and escalating concerns to obtain support. The Course Coordinator/Associate Clinical Educator will manage all identified issues related to clinical practice, professional behaviour, and scope of practice for students on placement, following guidelines of the Australian Nursing & Midwifery Accreditation Council.
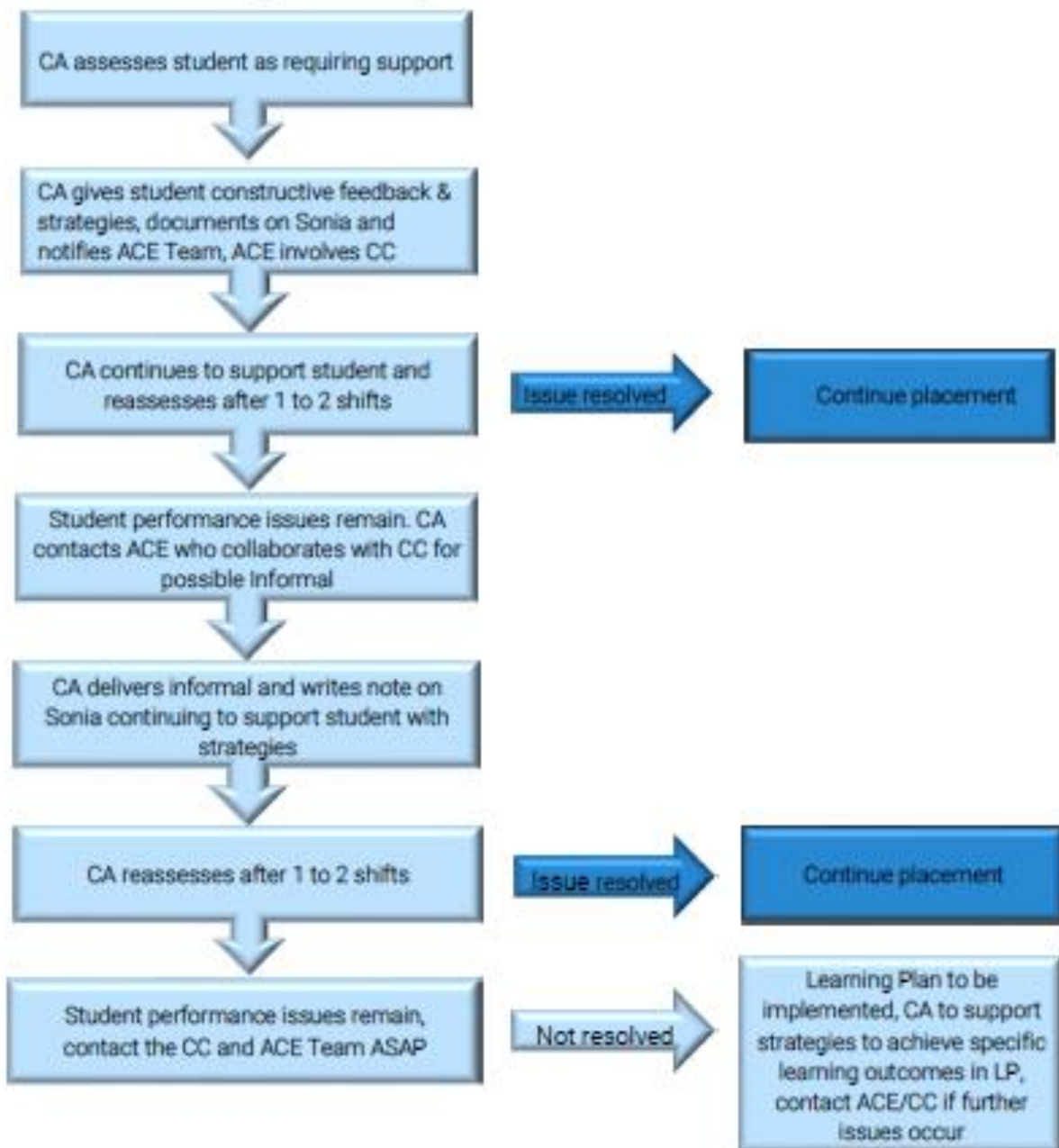
The Clinical Facilitator (CF) follows these steps when performance issues are recognised:

1. Assess the student using the ANSAT Behavioural Cues and UniSC Clinical Practice Framework for guidance. Use a variety of assessment techniques such as work directly with the student, speak with the buddy RN/other staff members, observe student's practice closely, review all their documentation etc.

2. Provide timely feedback to the student, identifying clear strategies for improvement. Document the conversation on Sonia Online, notifying the student information is there to review, and they may respond if desired. This note is viewable by UniSC and provides transparency for the student.

3. Reassess the student's practice within 1-2 shifts, if limited or inconsistent improvement is demonstrated, or significant deficits are identified, escalate immediately to UniSC Associate Clinical Educators (ACE) at ace@usc.edu.au for further support and collaboration regarding an Informal Assessment.

4. After collaborating with UniSC, meet with the student to deliver the Informal assessment, discussing strategies for improvement. Document a summary of the conversation on Sonia Online. This gives the student an opportunity to process and reflect on the information away from the clinical space.

5. If limited or inconsistent improvement continues after 1-2 shifts, and the student appears unlikely to succeed in any one of the standards, notify the CC and ACE immediately. This includes if scoring less than 3 at the progressive assessment. Timeliness is key in obtaining adequate support for the student.

6. To support the student's success, a learning plan will be developed by the CC/ACE and delivered in a meeting with the CA and student. The plan will supply specific strategies as a framework for the student to implement into practice. The CA supports the student to achieve the learning outcomes in the LP. This will require extra time from the CA.

7. If the student is inconsistent with the implemented strategies outlined in the LP, or further issues are identified, the CC is to be contacted as soon as possible.

*Adhere to the Escalation flowchart (Appendix 1)

If at any time a student may have **breached their scope of practice**, please contact the Course Coordinator and/or ACE Team immediately for further guidance.

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Appendix 1: Flowchart Escalating for Student Support

- CA assesses student as requiring support
- CA gives student constructive feedback & strategies, documents on Sonia and notifies ACE Team, ACE involves CC
- CA continues to support student and reassesses after 1 to 2 shifts → **Issue resolved** → Continue placement
- Student performance issues remain. CA contacts ACE who collaborates with CC for possible informal
- CA delivers informal and writes note on Sonia continuing to support student with strategies
- CA reassesses after 1 to 2 shifts → **Issue resolved** → Continue placement
- Student performance issues remain, contact the CC and ACE Team ASAP → **Not resolved** → Learning Plan to be implemented, CA to support strategies to achieve specific learning outcomes in LP, contact ACE/CC if further issues occur

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The Course Coordinator and/or Associate Clinical Educator is kept up to date with all issues and concerns that the clinical facilitator has with their students throughout the placement.

- Clinical facilitator identifies a clinical learning issue and informs the Course Coordinator or Associate Clinical Educator as appropriate.
- An Informal ANSAT is completed and discussed with the student
- The facilitator tells the student that they will be recording the conversation on Sonia Online and the strategies they have discussed.
- After discussion with the student the facilitator will document the conversation in Sonia Online in the Notes section of the relevant student's home page then 'Save'.
- The clinical facilitator informs the student that this information will be visible to them throughout the process. The student can also add a comment in the notes section of their placement page if they wish and save comment/s when finished.
- All documents relating to the identified issue are uploaded into Sonia Online in the + Add new document section directly below the notes section (on the same screen page in Sonia Online).
- Browse for document on your computer then upload.
- As students are required to view this document tick 'Show to Allocated Student' if you do not tick anything it will only be viewed by the facilitator and the course coordinator.
- If you do not want the site to view this document do not tick 'Show to site', also leave unticked 'Show to Unallocated Student' as it is not relevant in this setting.
- In the 'Category' section push arrow and select from options 'Placement Variance Documentation' then 'Save'.

The student and course coordinator will be able to view this document but not able to edit or remove it.

Supporting student learning – establishing a learning plan

If at any point of the PEP the student seems unlikely to succeed in any one of the seven Standards the Course Coordinator/Associate Clinical Educator needs to be notified immediately. This includes if scoring less than 3 at the Progressive assessment. If the concerns are not resolved, a learning plan will need to be implemented. This needs to be addressed as quickly and efficiently as possible. Steps to be followed are:

- Your role in this process is to support the student to achieve specific learning outcomes relating to the plan.
- If specific clinical learning deficits are not able to be addressed during the PEP, contact the course coordinator.
- Students who have a learning plan will require extra support.
- Please ensure that the ANSAT feedback and all the relevant paperwork is signed by both the student and you.

Safety considerations for students on a rural or remote placement

Undertaking placement in a rural or remote setting is a very exciting time for our nursing students and we thank the host facilities for the opportunity.

We have interviewed the students prior to placement and have given them a general overview of what to expect, but we would ask you to ensure that students have an orientation to the local town/district, ensuring that they are made aware of any apparent safety risks, unsafe areas of town, localised political unrests, local etiquette.

The Course Coordinator or an Associate Clinical Educator will contact you to discuss the student's assessment process and to assist you with any queries you may have regarding the placement.

Recommended reading for students and clinical facilitators

Chang, E., & Daly, J. (2019). *Transitions in nursing. Preparing for professional practice.* 5th edn, Elsevier Australia, Chatswood.

Levett-Jones, T., & Bourgeois, S. (2018). *The clinical placement. An essential guide for nursing students*. 4th edn, Elsevier Australia, Sydney.

Levett-Jones, T. (2017). *Clinical reasoning. Learning to think like a nurse*. 2nd edn, Pearson Australia, Frenchs Forest, NSW.

A 10-hour Professional Development short course is available through the University of Melbourne and supported by the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery - [Clinical Facilitation: Essential Skills and Principles](#) ($363).

Uniform shirt is now purchased at the UniSC Sunshine Coast campus.

Purchase online or via email MyPrint Shop products

Purchase and Postage Price: $35.00

- Visit in-store at Print Services, Building R, ground floor UniSC Sunshine Coast and purchase over the counter – payment via Eftpos only.
- Due to PCI Compliance, we are not permitted to take payment details over the phone anymore.

LADIES - Garment measurements

Size	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
Garment Half Chest (cm)	46.5	49	51.5	54	56.5	59	62	65	68

MENS - Garment measurements

Size	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL	5XL
Garment Half Chest (cm)	52	55	58	62	65	71	79

Clinical facilitator guides and resources

[2025 UniSC Nursing Calendar.pdf](#)

[Facilitators Guide to Sonia Online](#)

[CLINICAL FACILITATOR Guide to Emailing Students Sonia Online](#)

[Student guide to Self-evaluation ANSAT Sonia Online](#)

[Facilitator Guide to Student Time Sheets](#)