

Faculty of Health

Work Integrated Learning Unit Guideline for Pregnant Students

Section 1 – Purpose

This guideline establishes how the Faculty of Health (FOH) will support students who are pregnant during their course and who must undertake Work Integrated Learning (WIL) during their studies.

Section 2 - Scope

This guideline applies to all courses administered by the WIL Unit that include mandatory WIL (placements, field education, simulation, labs) in both clinical and non-clinical settings.

Section 3 - Policy

WIL within the Faculty is guided by the [WIL Framework](#), which provides guidance and assistance to staff involved in the design, delivery, administration, and evaluation of WIL. The [WIL Procedures](#) have been developed in accordance with this Framework and inform how the University:

- Establishes and monitors its WIL partners;
- Supports students to have an optimal WIL experience;
- Manages performance and conduct issues that arise during WIL activities;
- Monitors and quality assures its WIL activities; and
- Supports compliance

In particular, Section 4 (24-27) states that:

(24) Students should enrol as early as possible into their WIL units following the opening of enrolment. Delaying enrolment may impact WIL arrangements.

(25) Students should undertake their WIL in accordance with their course progressions.

(26) Prior to commencing WIL, students are required to:

- a. sign the WIL Student Statement;*
- b. comply with any additional requirements, including any national or state-based regulatory requirements and provide supporting evidence;*
- c. disclose any conflict of interest; and*
- d. advise any health conditions that may impact on their ability to participate in WIL or aggravate a pre-existing condition.*

(27) The University may prevent a student from commencing WIL if the conditions set out in clause (26) are incomplete.

Section 4 - Guideline Statement

Pre- and post-natal students attending WIL

FOH has a duty of care to all students and a number of safeguards are required to ensure that a student's health and well-being are maintained during and following pregnancy. To ensure that a student's health is not compromised, pregnant students may attend WIL:

- Up to, and not more than, 36 weeks' gestation
- After, and not before, six (6) weeks post-partum

While the Faculty may be able to facilitate pregnant students to attend WIL, healthcare facilities have a duty of care to their patients/clients and may not accept pregnant students.

Lactating students attending WIL

Students who are attending WIL and who need to breastfeed will be supported in all circumstances. The clinical teacher/supervisor will be advised that the student must be given time during WIL to express breast milk and either have facilities to store the milk, or have the baby brought to the student for lactation breaks.

Vaccinations

Southern Cross University (SCU) and the FOH comply with current Commonwealth and State guidelines and Public Health Orders on vaccinations for workers and students in the health industry. The University is also required to implement the vaccination mandates of WIL providers.

If pregnant students are not fully protected against the vaccine-preventable diseases in the Australian Immunisation Handbook, then neither medical practitioners, obstetricians, nor midwives will allow pregnant women to complete their vaccinations.

Pre-natal students in laboratory classes

Chemicals known to have reproductive, teratogenic or carcinogenic effects are used in small amounts in undergraduate chemistry and biochemistry practical classes, however, these chemicals are always used with appropriate engineering and personal protective controls in place.

Students should seek medical guidance in determining physical activity limitations and must discuss any suitable arrangements that may need to be modified for laboratory classes, with their Unit Assessor.

Section 5 – Procedures

1. Pre-natal students attending WIL

- 1.1. Students must provide to the WIL Unit a medical certificate at 34 weeks' gestation that:
 - 1.1.1. Is from a registered health practitioner (GP, midwife or obstetrician)
 - 1.1.2. Includes
 - 1.1.2.1. Provider number
 - 1.1.2.2. Signature
 - 1.1.2.3. Name of patient
 - 1.1.2.4. Date of examination
 - 1.1.2.5. Approximate due date
 - 1.1.3. Confirms that the student **is** fit to practice (FTP) – i.e. able to cope with the demands of WIL
 - 1.2. Students are cleared to attend WIL until 36 weeks' gestation
2. **Pre-natal students not attending WIL**
 - 2.1. Students who are less than 36 weeks' gestation who are unable to attend WIL, due to their pregnancy, must submit a Work Integrated Learning Attendance Variation Application (AVA) via Sonia Online, and must provide a medical certificate that:
 - 2.1.1. Is from a registered health practitioner (GP, midwife or obstetrician)
 - 2.1.2. Includes
 - 2.1.2.1. Provider number
 - 2.1.2.2. Signature
 - 2.1.2.3. Name of patient
 - 2.1.2.4. Date of examination
 - 2.1.2.5. Approximate due date
 - 2.1.3. Confirms that the student **is not** fit to practice (FTP) – i.e. able to cope with the demands of WIL
 - 2.2. WIL Unit to assess the WIL AVA and provide a determination to the student
 - 2.3. WIL Unit to work with the Unit Assessor to support the student to defer their WIL and to complete at a later stage
3. **Post-natal students attending WIL**
 - 3.1. Students must provide a medical certificate to the WIL Unit that provides clearance to return to WIL that
 - 3.1.1. Is from a registered health practitioner (GP, midwife or obstetrician)
 - 3.1.2. Includes
 - 3.1.2.1. Provider number
 - 3.1.2.2. Signature
 - 3.1.2.3. Name of patient
 - 3.1.2.4. Date of examination
 - 3.1.2.5. Approximate due date
 - 3.1.3. Confirms that the student **is** fit to practice (FTP) – i.e. able to cope with the demands of WIL

- 3.2. Once clearance is provided, no further WIL AVAs will be approved
4. **Students who are unable to meet vaccination requirements due to pregnancy**
 - 4.1. Must submit a WIL AVA to the WIL Unit and must provide a medical certificate that:
 - 4.1.1. Is from a registered health practitioner (GP, midwife or obstetrician)
 - 4.1.2. Includes
 - 4.1.2.1. Provider number
 - 4.1.2.2. Signature
 - 4.1.2.3. Name of patient
 - 4.1.2.4. Date of examination
 - 4.1.2.5. Approximate due date
 - 4.1.3. Confirms that the student is **not** fit to practice (FTP) – i.e. able to cope with the demands of WIL
 - 4.2. WIL Unit to assess the WIL AVA and provide a determination to the student
 - 4.3. WIL Unit to work with the Unit Assessor to support the student to defer their WIL and to complete at a later stage