



Student Placement Supervision Resource

READY TO START YOUR JOURNEY?

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Guide for Placement

What is an ACOM Student Placement Supervisor?

An ACOM Student Placement Supervisor has a strategic and important role in the development of the student. We believe that the best training happens on the ground, with students receiving real life, practical experience in developing the skills needed for their vocational call.

A supervisor is a facilitator of growth, primarily focused on the competency of the student, but also addressing character and formation issues as they impinge on the students' effectiveness in their area of service.

The supervisor is the primary feedback channel to the student regarding their competence in their area of placement, providing constructive and objective insight on both strengths and growth points. The role is not to tell the student what to do but rather to facilitate and encourage growth in their competency and character through reflective processes that come out of real life vocational situations. It is growth oriented rather than reporting oriented.

What Characteristics Make a Good Supervisor?

- Models a spiritual and/or vocational path that is appealing to the student
- Is a good listener – doesn't 'preach at' the student or give uninvited advice
- Has insight and honesty about themselves, and their vocational call
- Is experienced and competent in the student's general field training area at this placement
- Has the time to give to the student's growth and development
- Can regularly observe the student in their context
- Likes, respects and believes in the student and is committed to their growth
- Has a style of encouragement and a willingness to confront issues out of a commitment to the student's growth
- Able to help and encourage the student to ensure that they acquire whatever experience they need to prepare them for future vocational possibilities
- Has authority with the placement to organize specific opportunities for the student to complete their tasks.

What Does the Supervisor Do?

For many ACOM units, students are required to do at least 30 hours of placement in a suitable vocational context. What is most important is that a student's experience while studying appropriately equips them for where they want to go in their vocational call. The role of the supervisor is to help the student gain the right experiences, at the right time according to their developmental training needs.

The field work should be part of a genuine role at the placement, within which the supervisor has specific opportunities to provide guidance. The supervisor guides this field training, encourages the student, helps define specific tasks to be done, facilitates the student in reflecting on how they have functioned in their context, constructively challenges inadequate performance and provides insight for growth.

We suggest that supervisors meet with the student at the beginning of their study year to determine the details of their placement and to discuss and decide upon appropriate goals for the placement year. See section on Setting Goals in this handbook.

We then suggest that Supervisors meet with the student throughout the year. Supervisors can ask the student to work through the "Student Reflection Worksheet" to provide a helpful framework for the session with the

student. The “Student Reflection Worksheet” encourages the student to reflect on how their studies relate to their placement. Please note this is not compulsory.

We have included a number of helpful resources for supervisors in this handbook. It is not a requirement that you use these with the student you are supervising, they are here to help you and provide a framework for your supervision if you choose.

Thank you for considering this important role in the development of our ACOM students. For more information, please contact our Help Desk 1800 672 692 or info@acom.edu.au

Please note that the forms in this document may be helpful in guiding you through your Vocational Integrated Learning. These are not compulsory, but they may aid you in completing the compulsory forms in each of your units on Moodle.

Student Reflection

This reflection sheet may be completed towards the end of each trimester of study.

What areas of service have you been involved in this trimester?

What unit/s have you been studying this trimester and in what ways have you been able to practically apply your studies to your vocational context this trimester?

Where do you see tension between what you are learning and what you are doing?

If you could do one thing differently as a result of your studies, what would it be?

What changes will you make in your life or practice as a result of your studies?

Guide for Placement

What is a Placement?

A placement can be any place where an ACOM student can fulfil the field training component of their course. Students can choose a local church, workplace, or other suitable place of intentional service that will give opportunities to serve and grow.

What Does a Placement Do?

The placement provides opportunities for frontline service in areas of the student's choice and agreed to by the placement. The chosen areas should release the student's gifts and stretch them to grow personally and vocationally. The student selects their supervisor, who is usually based at the placement and can oversee and facilitate the reflective growth processes.

Flexibility in General Field Training Hours

- Students are given flexibility in determining their placement hours. For example for those students whose placement is a local church setting It is expected that students will negotiate with their placement what ministry areas they will engage in to complete their hours. Students should consider what would be the best preparation for their call to ministry. Church attendance can be included in the field training hours.
- Allowances for **travel time** should be made in the field training hours where it is a significant factor.
- Allowances can be made by the supervisor for the benefit of the student in times of **special need** or **stress**.

Getting Started Checklist

- ☐ Agree together with the student on a frontline area for their field training which will release the student's gifts and stretch them to grow personally and vocationally.
- ☐ Agree together with the student how the field training hours (number of units undertaken this year x 30 hours) will be allocated over the year – e.g. 3 hours per week.
- ☐ Agree together with the student what their goals will be for the year.
- ☐ Agree together with the student what (if any) financial assistance will be provided.
- ☐ Assist the student to complete a Code of Conduct and a Working with Children (Police) check as appropriate.
- ☐ Publicise and recognise the commencement of the student placement with you. This can greatly improve the effectiveness of the student's experience.
- ☐ Help the student find a suitable supervisor if requested to do so.

Tips for Placements

The placement can greatly enhance the effectiveness of the student's field training by getting started on the right foot. Here are some ideas:

- Give the student a **title** that helps people at the placement grasp the student's role.
- Have a public **commissioning** – just a brief introduction, outline the student's field training and if appropriate prayer.
- Give opportunities for the student to develop a **public profile** with some up-front tasks.
- Include the student in any **listing** you make for your placement, for example, if the placement is a church, list the student as a ministry team member on the newsletter.
- Be **flexible** in the first few months of the student's field training about specific tasks, to give them room to settle into their areas of gifting, growing and passion.
- If the student is new to the placement, ask a person or family to give **personal support** to the student.
- Invite the student to **participate in leadership discussions** and to appropriate events – eg. Retreats, refreshers etc.

Setting Goals

Remember

- Goals are about what the student hopes to *achieve* in their field training
- Supervision goals are about what the student hopes to *learn* through the supervision process in this year
- Mentoring goals are about what the student hopes to *become* through their whole-life experience of this year

Process

Before your next meeting ask the student to think through and suggest their own goals of what they hope to achieve, learn or become. This encourages 'ownership' and the student's commitment to the goals. One sentence per goal will do. The supervisor then reviews the student's suggestions and, in discussion with the student, hones them into effective statements of desired outcomes within the available time frame.

Definition

A goal is a statement of what a learner is to be like when they have satisfactorily completed a learning experience. A well written goal conveys to others a picture identical to the picture the student has in mind. The best goal is one that excludes the greatest number of possible alternatives.

Adapted from "Preparing Instructional Objectives" by Robert Mager

Good goals are:

- S – specific (naming areas and issues to address)
- M – measurable (so that progress can be discerned)
- A – achievable (within the year-long process)
- C – consistent (with development as a practitioner)

The key to a good objective is in the verb used:

Verbs open to many interpretations	Verbs open to fewer interpretations
to know	to write/ to articulate
to understand	to set up/ to establish
to really understand	to identify
to appreciate	to develop
to fully appreciate	to outline
to grasp the significance of	to implement
to enjoy	to construct
to believe	to list
to have faith in	to define

Documentation

Regularly re-visit the goals developed as they will provide direction for the year for the mentoring or supervision process. Goals may be modified, concluded or added through the year.

Sample goals:

Placement: To set up a new weekly group for senior high school students

Supervision: To identify the particular emotional and spiritual needs of senior high-school students and implement 4 strategies to meet these

Mentoring: To develop a self-awareness of my style of communication with varying age-groups

ACOM Supervision

Student's Name: _____

Placement: _____

Student's Placement Title: _____

Start Date: _____ Finish Date: _____

Placement Goals

What role/s would you like to be equipped for by the end of your training?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What skills will be important to acquire to perform such a role/s?	Previous experience with these skills:	Plans for the coming year to acquire these skills:

Vocational Goals

List the agreed outcomes that the student hopes to *achieve* in their placement this year:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Supervision Goals

List the agreed outcomes about what the student hopes to *learn* from their placement this year:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Mentoring Goals

List the agreed outcomes about what the student hopes to *become* from their life experiences this year:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Supervision Strategies

List the agreed strategies for this year that will enable the student to reach their vocational, supervision and mentoring goals:

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____

Other

Note: Do not return these forms to ACOM but rather keep as a record between student and placement.

Supervision Meeting

- Where appropriate pray!!! Before, during, after...
- Talk less than 20% of the time
- Build a healthy relationship
- Use questions effectively
- Focus on the student, not their role
- Don't clone yourself
- Don't fix! Empower them
- Leave the ball in their court – don't do it for them
- Be creative
- Facilitate, don't preach or give advice
- Fill out a log at the end of each meeting

End of Year Placement

1. What went well in your placement this year?

2. What didn't go according to plan this year?

3. What changes would you like to see for next year, to ensure you develop the appropriate skills?

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Philosophy

Like it or not, we all have a philosophy of – or approach to – coaching or mentoring which we use when given a role of empowering or influencing others. We can radically improve our effectiveness by becoming aware of our philosophy, and being willing to broaden and adapt it to suit the person and the context. Document how your coaching/mentoring philosophy has changed over the year so far.

1. How has your coaching / mentoring philosophy changed?

2. How is my philosophy helping my student?

3. How is my philosophy NOT helping my student?

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People Who Have Influenced My Development

List people and leaders who have significantly influenced your development

Year	Name	How did they influence you?

Questions:

1. Did you (or the person who influenced you) realise at the time that coaching/mentoring was occurring?
2. What kinds of people seem to recur?
3. How does this affect how you will tend to coach/mentor others?
4. Note which of your coaching/mentoring experiences have been:
 - passive
 - occasional
 - intensive intentional

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From Bad to Good

1. Bad Coaching

Avoid these features common in bad coaching or mentoring processes:

- Dictating
- Preaching
- Advice-giving
- Rescuing
- Ridiculing/judging

Good Coaches talk less than 20 % of the time.

2. Good Coaching

Good Coaches/Mentors make the shift from:

- Teller to Trainer
- Director to Empowered
- Supervisor to Facilitator

3. Asking Good Questions

- Easily understood
- Not complex
- Can be answered briefly
- Require thought
- Encourage self-disclosure
- Do not allow for one-word answers

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Coaching Styles

Adapted from Donald F. Beisswenger

	1. Boss	2. Instructor	3. Apprentice	4. Training	5. Resource	6. Consultation	7. Spiritual Guide
Primary Goal	Accomplish Tasks	Transfer of Learning	Professional Socialisation	Professional Socialisation	Resources Utilisation	Expand student's capacity to clarify and solve problems	Develop capacity to discern God's activity and meditate on experience
Coach's Task	Define work responsibilities	Create an educational work arena to share / appraise	Involve student in his/her work	Design a learning context	Be aware of resources	Know skills of consultation	Know how to read life theologically
Focus of Attention	Evaluation of performance	Evaluation of performance	What, why and how Coaches do what is done	Personal and professional growth of student	Project for which resources are needed - student's ability to find them	Issues, goals, problems of the student	The Student's discernment
Dynamics	Boss / Worker	Professor / Student	Craftsman / Learner	Professional / Learner	Expert/Learner	Consultant / Learner	Guide / Learner
Dominant Control	Coach / mentor	Coach / mentor	Coach/mentor	Collaborative, emphasis on Coach / Mentor's initiative	Student	Collaborative, emphasis on student's initiative	Collaborative

Student Placement Supervision Resource

Awareness of Your Relationship

Adapted from H & W Hendricks "As Iron Sharpens Iron"

1. In what ways is this person like me?

Do you have a lot in common or none at all?

Do you find it easy to spend time with this student or is it a strain?

2. Do I respond to this person's need or situation?

Do they move your heart?

Do you feel motivated to do something?

3. Does this person want my help?

Is the relationship forced or natural?

Why would they want my help?

4. Is this the right time to help this person?

What are they open/able/needing to hear?

What are they currently closed/unable to hear/unteachable?

5. What are their needs as I see them?

What are three issues that will keep this person from moving ahead?

Take a step back and look at the big picture: what does this person really need?
