

Field Placement Behaviour and Termination Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process to be followed when a Paralegal Student is dismissed from a Field Placement. It is intended to guide the Paralegal Student in keeping with the College's mission and shared values. It is intended to respect and protect the rights and responsibilities of the Paralegal Student, staff at Mohawk College, and the Field Placement location, also known as the Host Employer. It will provide support to staff in managing a Paralegal Student dismissal and outlines a range of responses including restorative measures and disciplinary sanctions that may be implemented depending on the conditions of the dismissal from Field Placement.

Policies

Mohawk College has a number of policies related to the prevention or resolution of difficulties that students sometimes encounter.

The policies define procedures to resolve complaints, to launch academic appeals, and to protect human rights. Policies also define some of the expectations the College has about student behaviour and responsibilities, including sanctions which may be applied when offences occur. The Student Behaviour Policy defines the standard of conduct expected of all students while enrolled at Mohawk College and includes conduct while off campus and on field placements. The Paralegal Program Field Placement Behaviour and Termination Policy is a specific policy covering Paralegal Program Students ("Paralegal Students") who experience difficulties with their field placement and/or are removed from a Host Employer due to student behavioural issues. Nothing in this policy is intended to override and/or limit or replace any existing Mohawk College policy which is currently in force.

The Student Behaviour Policy of Mohawk College (Policy SS-3200-2006 and/or any subsequent superceding policy) will be followed.

Rules/Responsibilities

- a. All Paralegal Students are responsible for upholding the College Vision, Mission, and Values when on a Field Placement.
- b. The Paralegal Student is responsible for maintaining an environment where they are respectful and behave appropriately while on a Field Placement.
- c. Mohawk College does not condone and will respond to behaviour that is illegal, harmful, or threatening to others or that is disruptive, abusive, intimidating, or that vandalizes the Field Placement property.
- d. The Paralegal Student is responsible for reporting, in writing, any inappropriate behaviour they have witnessed or experienced while at the Host Employer as soon as possible to the Paralegal Program Coordinator.

Crediting of Placement Hours

Credit for time completed in the field in the event of a placement termination will be dealt with by the Program Coordinator on an individual basis, and will take into account factors such as the reason for the placement termination and the amount of time spent on the placement that satisfies the Paralegal Program field placement course requirements.

Response to a Report from a Paralegal Student or Field Placement Host Employer

Paralegal Students on a field placement and their field placement supervisor/s have an obligation to report in writing, and on a timely basis, any problems they are experiencing which cannot be resolved and threatens the completion of the placement.

- a. The Paralegal Program Coordinator will review the issues raised and will communicate with both the student and the field placement supervisor.
- b. If both the student and their field placement supervisor mutually agree, a mediation meeting will be arranged by the Program Coordinator as soon as possible to resolve any outstanding matters.
- c. Disciplinary and/or restorative responses are available to deal with inappropriate Paralegal Student behaviour where appropriate. Both the nature of the issue(s) and the Paralegal Student's previous record of conduct will determine the corrective response to remedy a particular situation.
- d. Disciplinary sanctions may be progressive. They will follow the Procedure for Progressive Discipline below and the Student Behaviour Policy of Mohawk College.
- e. Support will be offered to the Paralegal Student through the appropriate services available through Mohawk College.

Support will continue to be offered to the Paralegal Student through the appropriate services available through Mohawk College throughout the Progressive Discipline process. These services include but are not limited to:

- I. Counselling, Accessible Learning and Health Services Department
- II. Dispute Resolution Services
- III. Career Services

Progressive Discipline

When the conduct reported is determined to require discipline the following protocol shall be followed:

Level One – Verbal Warning: A Paralegal Student will be given a verbal warning when he/she engages in problematic conduct or performance. The College feels that Paralegal Students have the right to be informed of field placement related concerns and be provided with the opportunity to improve and succeed within a placement setting. As a first step, a verbal caution is meant to alert the Paralegal Student that a problem may exist or one has been identified. Verbal warnings

will be documented and maintained by the Paralegal Program Coordinator. Any supports identified at this stage will be provided to the Paralegal Student.

Level two – Written Warning: A written warning will be given when a Paralegal Student engages in conduct that justifies a written warning or the student engages in unacceptable behaviour or continued poor performance after a Level One verbal warning had been attained. The Paralegal Student will meet with the Paralegal Program Coordinator to review the previously identified concern(s) that continues to persist and the supports provided for improvement or progression. An objective of the meeting to provide and reinforce the College’s desire to find a solution that will give the Paralegal Student the best opportunity to correct the concerns and be successful in their Field Placement. Areas for improvement will be clearly defined and provided to the student within the written warning. Written warnings will be maintained in the Paralegal Student’s file with the Paralegal Program Coordinator.

Level Three – Termination of Placement: Termination with cause of the Field Placement for the Paralegal Student by the Host Employer or the College may occur for any of following:

- a. the Paralegal Student violated the Paralegal Code of Conduct
- b. the Paralegal Student violated the Student Behaviour Policy of Mohawk College (Policy SS-3200-2006)
- c. the Paralegal Student did not adhere to the Paralegal Student Field Placement Agreement, or
- d. the Paralegal Student has been subject to varying progressive levels of discipline and has not corrected his/her behaviour or performance

A Paralegal Student whose Field Placement has been terminated by a Level Three discipline shall be responsible for securing an alternative placement approved by the Paralegal Program Coordinator. A student who is unable to complete the required 140 placement hours shall be assigned an unsuccessful grade for the Field Practicum.

Remediation Field Placement - College Obtained

When a student has been subject to a Level Three discipline, consideration may be granted for the College to find and provide a remediation Field Placement for the Paralegal Student to complete their Field Practicum during the current semester, subject to the following conditions:

- a. The Paralegal Program is aware of a medical condition or extenuating circumstances which had an ongoing or extended impact on the Paralegal Student’s performance during the Field Placement, or
- b. There is independent evidence, or good reason to suspect mitigating factors during the Field Placement which the Student had little to no control over, or which limited the Paralegal Student’s opportunity to remedy the situation.

A Paralegal Student who is successfully granted a remediation Field Placement by the College will be provided with supplementary Field Placement training material to ensure a successful work placement.

Remediation Field Placement - Independently Obtain

A Paralegal Student who wishes to receive further consideration for a remediation Field Placement is required to independently search and obtain a Field Placement. The proposed Host Employer must be approved by the Program Coordinator.

Additionally, the Paralegal Student shall provide the Paralegal Program Coordinator with a signed minimum two-page reflection document, which will be placed in their file, and articulates the following:

1. Admission of responsibility and ownership for the termination of the Field Placement. Describe in detail the cause(s) of the termination of the Field Placement and the nature of the progressive events leading to the termination.
2. Describes the lessons learned from this experience and what the Paralegal Student would do differently if the same situation would occur.
3. The Paralegal Student will set out the planned changes in behaviour he or she will make to successfully complete the requirement of a subsequent field placement.
4. Provides justification as to why a remediation Field Placement should be granted.

The student shall provide the Program Coordinator with complete details of the proposed Host Employer. The Paralegal Student shall provide the following information:

- Host Employer/Supervisor contact information
- Supervisor name,
- Supervisor Licensee status,
- Description of type of work to be carried out
- Dates and times of the scheduled placement

The Program Coordinator will determine if the placement is suitable and that the necessary insurance coverage provided by the College will be applicable. Once approved, all necessary contracts and paperwork must be signed by the proposed Host Employer and submitted to the Program Coordinator. During the course of an independently student obtained Field Placement, the Program Coordinator will monitor the placement through correspondence and/or discussions with the field placement supervisor and the student to ensure that:

1. the field placement is progressing successfully;
2. the student is complying with his/her statement and any recommendations submitted in the reflection document; and
3. assistance is provided where possible if any difficulties arise.

Should the student not successfully complete the placement and placement course requirements before the deadline stated and/or if the placement is again terminated due to the student's own behaviour, the student will:

- a. fail the course;
- b. be responsible to pay all required fees to register for and retake the course, and
- c. repeat the above procedure/steps pertaining to requirements when a termination is due to a student's wrongful behaviour.

A Paralegal Student, who is denied a proposed remediation Field Placement, is unable to secure an alternative Field Placement, and is unable to complete the required 140 placement hours shall be assigned an unsuccessful grade for the Field Practicum.