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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**Guidance for Sandwich Placement Academic supervisorS (and equivalent ROLES)**

**Introduction**

This guide is for academic staff with responsibility for supervising sandwich placement students during their sandwich placement year. This should be used as an overview, with any Department-specific directions coming from your Department’s Business & Engagement Lead, Employability Lead or Placement Lead (as appropriate).

**Successful completion of the Placement to award the Sandwich Degree:**

The completion of the sandwich placement element of the course is determined by the minimum duration requirements being met (weeks and hours – minimum of 24 weeks, full time 21+ hours); during this period the student must be engaged with both the placement provider and supervising academic to successfully complete the placement and progress to their final year on the sandwich degree route of the course. **If students are not engaged, this should be reported to the Work Experience Team at the earliest opportunity where we can manage the individual student situation collaboratively**. By default, the Work Experience Team will assume your student is engaged, and any student who has met the duration threshold will be recommended to your Department’s Employability Lead (or equivalent) as a successful completion, therefore being awarded a full Sandwich placement degree on graduation. This is separate to the Applied Professional Diploma (APDip). Further information on the APDip is available in the [staff guide](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/highlyskilledemployment/academic-responsibilities/apdip-staff-guide-2021-22/).

**What you need to do during the placement year to support your student**

**Introduce yourself:**

* It is important your student knows that you are their Placement Academic Supervisor (or equivalent). **This is the most common source of complaint from students: they don’t know who their academic is.**
* If you were the student’s Academic Adviser during Level 5, you should already have a relationship with the student, so you can keep your introduction light-touch. However, this may not always be the case, as the Academic Adviser role is separate to the Placement Academic Supervisor (or equivalent, e.g. Work Experience Mentor) and one should not conflate the other.

**3x Touch-points:**

* During the placement year, you should conduct a minimum of **3 virtual touch-points** with your students on placement. Typically, these would be at the beginning, middle and end of the placement.
* If a student is completing several placements during their placement year, there is no expectation to complete 3 touch-points per placement; only **3 touch-points per student**.
* The purpose of the touch-points are to check the student’s overall progress on placement, their wellbeing, application of subject knowledge and to monitor completion of the APDip through their reflections and achievements to date within their Synoptic Portfolio.
* In your first touch-point you should aim to support your student to set, or confirm as appropriate, any learning objectives for their placement. The objectives should link to the course where possible and should require the student to apply learning from the course to complete the objective(s) successfully, and/or support any anticipated learning for their final year through the development of their knowledge, skills or professional behaviours.
* Ideally, each touch-point should include input from the placement provider and the student. However, this may not always be possible for every touch-point. A written statement from the placement provider may be sufficient for one or more of the touch-points, but ideally you will speak directly to the placement provider on at least one occasion.

It is recommended that you complete the beginning, middle & end touch-points around the following approximate dates, unless otherwise directed by your Department’s Employability Lead (or equivalent):

**For Undergraduates & Postgraduates (September starters)**

Touch-point 1: by 31 October

Touch-point 2: by 28 February

Touch-point 3: by 30 June

**For Postgraduates (January starters)**

Touch-point 1: by 28 February

Touch-point 2: by 30 June

Touch-point 3: by 31 October

These dates are recommendations based on a standard year-long placement – therefore the dates you conduct the touch-points should be adapted to suit you and your student’s placement year.

**Applied Professional Diploma (APDip) submission, deadline, and approval:**

* All students on sandwich placements are strongly encouraged to complete the Applied Professional Diploma (APDip) by working on their Synoptic Portfolio with you throughout their placement year.
* Completion of the APDip does not affect progression to final year; however, all students are charged a placement fee (this is included in the course costs for PG, and as a separate charge for UG) and therefore the APDip is part of their entitlement.
* The APDip should be considered an essential part of the student’s placement experience and is designed specifically to enable students to demonstrate their professional development on placement for their future career planning.
* Toward the end of the placement year, you will need to confirm that a reasonable attempt has been made, in the submission of your student’s Synoptic Portfolio for them to receive their Applied Professional Diploma certificate. Each Synoptic Portfolio is unique to your course so only local academic staff can make this judgement.
* A [standard Synoptic Portfolio](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/highlyskilledemployment/files/2019/09/APDip-Synoptic-Portfolio.Exemplar.docx) is available via the [Highly Skilled Employment blog](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/highlyskilledemployment/sandwich-placements/). However, it is strongly encouraged that this is adapted by your Employability Lead (or equivalent) to meet the specific needs of your course.
* The deadline for submissions is set by your Employability Lead (or equivalent) and should be made available to students on the placement blackboard site for your Department.
* The *recommendation* is - **30 June** for students to submit their Synoptic Portfolio and for these to be reviewed by you as their Placement Academic Supervisor (or equivalent) within **3 weeks** of this deadline by scoring the submission 100 out of 100 in Grade Centre.
* This must be completed by the deadline set by your Employability Lead (or equivalent), and in any case, no later than **30 September** so that the Work Experience Team can order your student’s certificate via Registry Operations in Student & Academic Services.
* There is no need to set up any submission points, this will be prepopulated by the owner of your Department’s placement blackboard site; this is usually your Employability Lead (or equivalent) along with your Department’s submission deadline.

**Extension requests**:

* As the APDip is co-curricular, it is not part of the Request to Extend a Submission Deadline process.
* Any extensions must be managed locally by the Department/Course, for example, in consultation with your Department’s Employability Lead (or equivalent).
* If the reason for the extension is that the placement is not finished by 30 June, or any other deadline set by your Department’s Employability Lead (or equivalent), please encourage your students to submit the latest copy by the deadline for you to make a decision as to whether a reasonable attempt has been made up until that point and continue to work with the student until the conclusion of their placement.

For more routine support, please signpost students to the [Your work placement: support on placement page](https://www.shu.ac.uk/student-placements/while-you-are-on-placement/support-on-placement).

**Problems on placement:**

* You, and your student’s line manager, are both responsible for your student’s professional development whilst on placement.
* Some problems reported by the student can be resolved by you independently, where the nature of the problem is such that the solution may be to coach or mentor the student in navigating sensitive issues. Such as workplace conflicts, or lack of exposure to the right level of work to enable them to develop their professional behaviours, competencies etc. For advice & guidance, the Work Experience Specialist aligned to your Department is available to help signpost to sources of specialist support: [workexperience@shu.ac.uk](mailto:workexperience@shu.ac.uk)
* Serious issues or causes for concern should be reported immediately:

Bullying, Harassment or Discrimination:

[Report + Support - Sheffield Hallam University(shu.ac.uk)](https://reportandsupport.shu.ac.uk/)

Urgent welfare issues:

[Urgent help | Sheffield Hallam University (shu.ac.uk)](https://www.shu.ac.uk/wellbeing/urgent-help)

* If your student is at risk of being dismissed from placement due to their behaviour, lack of engagement, performance etc. You should urgently notify both the Work Experience Team **(**[workexperience@shu.ac.uk](mailto:workexperience@shu.ac.uk)) and your Department’s Employability Lead (or equivalent). In this scenario, a decision will be required by your Department’s Employability Lead (or equivalent) to determine the most appropriate action in relation to the student’s placement year. The range of options include:
  + **Continue** on the placement with a commitment from the student to improve, using the Placement Provider’s performance management procedures, closely monitored by Placement Academic Supervisor (or equivalent);
  + **Withdrawal from the placement, with permission to secure a further placement** to make up any deficit in number of weeks to be awarded the Sandwich degree (to be approved via Work Experience Team – further information about approvals on [MyHallam](https://www.shu.ac.uk/student-placements/before-your-placement/get-your-placement-approved));
  + **Fail placement year** – if student has not yet completed minimum duration requirements for placement, and/or awarding sandwich degree would be inappropriate;
  + **Complete placement year, no further placement –** if student has completed minimum duration requirements, and awarding sandwich degree would be appropriate.

**institutional evaluation process**

* Introduced to sandwich placements in 2021/22 were two evaluation points to provide in-year information on how placements are progressing across the institution.
* The primary focus of these evaluations will be to provide a quantitative measure of the overall progress of placements across the institution in-year and to assist localised intervention planning whilst there is still an opportunity to take corrective action during the remainder of the placement. This is also a response to regular student feedback asking for more regular contact with the University and an increase sense of belonging.
* The evaluations will be administered by the Work Experience Team and will be emailed to all students on placement as part of the standard service offer for Sandwich Placements.
* The focus of the questions will be around the student’s engagement and progression on placement and should be used as a tool by your Department’s Employability Lead (or equivalent) to inform decisions around course design, student experience and NSS as appropriate. This should complement the 3 touch-points made by Academic Placement Supervisors acting as an additional means of keeping in touch with students and an opportunity for them to provide feedback or request additional support.
* In addition, the results may also be used by Placement Academic Supervisors (or equivalent) to inform discussions in advance of touch-points.
* For standard sandwich placements there are two planned evaluation points during the academic year in which students are on placement: **December (Mid-year Evaluation)**; and **June (Final Evaluation)**. With a similar timeframe adapted for Postgraduate placements starting in January, i.e. Mid-year in June and Final in December.
* Questions will be co-designed with Employability Lead (or equivalent) across Colleges and shared with Placement Academic Supervisors (or equivalent) in advance. The results will not be anonymised, and this will be clear to respondents.
* The evaluations are not a compulsory part of the placement and will not affect progression, but participation is strongly encouraged to help guide and monitor student development and for future development and growth of sandwich placements.

For more routine support, please signpost students to the [Your work placement: support on placement page](https://www.shu.ac.uk/student-placements/while-you-are-on-placement/support-on-placement).