Remote Working during COVID-19

Recently the NSW Legal Profession Board wrote to all PLT courses in relation to arrangements which courses have been forced to make in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board has set out the following requirements:

An initial meeting between supervisor and student must be scheduled prior to starting work place experience remotely, or if such arrangements have already begun, as soon as possible. During this meeting, they must discuss and agree between them the nature of the work that the student will be undertaking as well as a framework for ongoing supervision.

The framework should address the following:

- Method of communication. A primary method of communication must be agree as well as a preferred secondary method of communication. The primary method of communication for contact that would usually occur face to face is video-conferencing software. Email and telephone call are secondary methods of communication.

- Frequency of supervision. It is expected that there will be at least daily contact between the supervisor and the PLT student.

- How written work will be dealt with.

- How new tasks will be assigned.

- How ad hoc queries will be addressed.

- Students must not have direct client contact in the absence of the supervisor while they are working remotely.

The Board has encouraged PLT providers to ensure that appropriate guidelines are in place to ensure the safe and effective operation of the above alternatives, particularly in relation to remote working.

The Board has emphasised that this is a temporary arrangement and that once the social and travel restrictions arising from the pandemic are lifted, the Board expects that PLT courses, including the workplace experience component, will revert to the previously accredited delivery modes.

If you are a student who is currently undertaking work/a placement for credit towards Practical Experience (75411) but are yet to submit a Form 1 to have this approved, please forward this document onto your workplace supervisor and ensure you meet with them to discuss the nature of your work and supervisory arrangements as per the instructions above.

If any of these points cause you difficulty, please email Associate Professor Bronwyn Olliffe Bronwyn.Olliffe@uts.edu.au.

Thank you to all Supervisors for providing practical experience placements for our students. The UTS Faculty of Law appreciates your commitment to the preparation of our students for professional practice.