

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can I find more information and resources for Professional Experience?

Handbooks, calendars, and other resources can be found [here](#).

2. What's the difference between a mentor and a supervisor?

Your mentor and supervisor must be two different people. Your mentor is the classroom teacher with whom you will spend the most time. Your supervisor is the person who will come to visit your class and observe one off lessons. Some Professional Experiences require 1 visit and others require 2 or 3, depending on where you are within your degree. See your Professional Experience Handbook for more information.

3. What do I do if I can't secure a placement before my PE commencement date?

Please ensure that you are keeping evidence of your communications with schools. If you have not been able to secure a school, please send us evidence of having contacted 30 schools, and we will attempt to reach out to different schools that may be further out from your area. If you live in a regional/rural/remote area and do not have access to 30 schools, please reach out sooner so that we can discuss some alternatives.

4. Why is it so hard to find placements?

Many external factors contribute to the existing difficulty students face in securing placements all over Australia. The main reason is the current teacher shortage is impacting teacher workloads, so less teachers are agreeing to mentor. To make it easier to get a placement, we suggest volunteering in a school, as they may be more inclined to approve your placement if they know who you are and you have demonstrated your work ethic.

5. I am having issues with SONIA, who do I contact?

Contact us via email with screenshots if appropriate (professional.experience@curtin.edu.au), and we will triage your query to have it rectified as soon as possible. Please be aware that your placement will not show on SONIA if you have not submitted the appropriate checks and documentation.

6. Can I do a Professional Experience in the school where I work?

Yes. There are processes of application to allow pre-service teachers to complete a Professional Experience within the school where they work. Pre-service teachers must meet eligibility criteria which vary between courses. Please email the Office of Professional Experience on professional.experience@curtin.edu.au with an outline of your situation, and you will receive the appropriate application.

7. What are the steps if I am absent from PE? Where are absentee forms located and submitted?

If you are absent during your prac you will need to make up the days at the end. Absentee forms are located and submitted under the *Forms* tab in Sonia. You will notice a drop-down box at the top of the page, select the form and click *add*. Completed forms are submitted to the mentor and then sent to the PE team.

8. Are pre-visits a requirement?

Curtin requires pre-service teachers to complete two pre-visits at their allocated school or service before beginning Professional Experience 4. However, some schools and states may require pre-visits for any type of Professional Experience placement. For this reason, all pre-service teachers must contact their placement school or service to confirm the specific requirements and arrange the necessary visits.

9. Can I do a Professional Experience overseas?

A maximum of 50% of total Professional Experience placement days (in formal school settings) be

undertaken overseas (please note that international students will need to check their visa requirements), and all Professional Experience 4 placements must be undertaken in Australia. Any placement undertaken overseas must be approved by your Course Coordinator.

All Professional Experience placements, whether undertaken in Australia or overseas, must meet all relevant assessment, unit, course and Fieldwork participation requirements.

10. Am I able to change the dates for when I go out on my Professional Experience?

No, the School of Education arranges specific dates for Professional Experience and students must adhere to these dates. Please refer to the [Curtin Fieldwork Manual](#) and the [Assessment and Student Progression Manual](#).