During the clinical placement

Orientation to the venue or ward

All students are required to attend orientation at the venue/ward assigned. The dates of these compulsory orientations are on the 'Placement calendar' which can be found on the 'Clinical placements' page on the School’s website.

Students who do not attend the compulsory orientations, and who cannot provide documented evidence of the exceptional circumstance, will be removed from the allocated placement. Students who are removed from their allocated placement will be reallocated at a time when a placement is available.

Riverland student pre-clinical/orientation meetings will be held at the Renmark campus.

Attendance requirements

- **DEU placements**
  
  Students attending a DEU each semester will be required, as 1st year students, to undertake two days per week over a three-week period; 2nd year students, to undertake two days per week over a nine-week period; and 3rd year students, to undertake two days per week, extending to three days per week in semester 2, over a 13-15 week period.

- **Block placements**
  
  Students undertaking a block placement will be required to attend 5 days per week over a 3-8 week period (depending on year level and semester).
Supervision

➤ **DEU**

Each DEU has a clinical facilitator and a DEU liaison nurse who, together, ensure students meet their clinical learning objectives.

➤ **Block**

Block placement has a clinical facilitator who will liaise with placement staff to ensure students meet their clinical learning objectives.

Shifts

All students are responsible for ensuring they can attend the full rostered shifts in clinical venues. Occasional weekend shifts in some venues, and others as advised in individual Topic information/Topic details booklets or the venue. Shift times vary from venue to venue and it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they are aware of the shift times for the venue.

Uniforms

Freshly laundered uniforms must be worn each day while on placement. (See the earlier section on 'Student uniforms'.)

Illness or injury while on clinical placement

➤ **Illness**

- Students who are unwell on any day of their clinical placement must decide whether or not they should attend the placement venue.
- If unfit for clinical practice, students need to contact their clinical facilitator and ward/venue and inform them of their intended absence. Not informing the clinical facilitator and venue is unprofessional and may warrant a formal warning or issuance of a clinical learning contract.
- Students who are unable to phone should arrange for someone else to do so.
• Absences of two days or more of continuous clinical practice will require the provision of a medical certificate.

• If a student is absent from clinical for one week or more, they must obtain a statement from a medical officer or student counsellor to indicate their fitness for resumption of studies. It is to be submitted to the course coordinator and topic coordinator.

• Students who become unwell or who are injured while on clinical placement need to inform their clinical facilitator and the clinical liaison or RN or RM-in-charge of the ward/area in which they are working and arrange for transport home. If students are too unwell to travel home, arrangements may need to be made for treatment and/or transportation. The cost of this will need to be met by the student.

• If students are exposed to infections against which they are not immune, they should immediately seek advice from the clinical facilitator, supervisor or infection control consultants.

• In the event of an infectious illness, such as hepatitis B, a medical statement as to the absence of risk of communication of the illness is required. Such information will be passed to the relevant coordinator(s).

➢ Injury/incident report

Students who are injured or involved in an incident while on clinical placement should report the injury/incident immediately to the clinical facilitator, the DEU liaison nurse or midwife or the RN or RM-in-charge of the ward/area.

Steps to take:

1. Report the accident/incident to the most appropriate person at the venue immediately.
2. Complete a venue’s Accident/incident report form at the venue where the injury/incident occurred. This does not need to be sent to the School of Nursing & Midwifery.
3 Complete a Flinders University Accident/incident report form available from the School Office. On returning the completed/signed form to the School Office, staff will forward the form to the University’s Occupational Health & Safety Unit for their records.

**Missed clinical days**

Students should contact their clinical facilitator if absent from their clinical placement venue.

Should a student miss any clinical they will need to initiate discussion with their clinical facilitator regarding completion of the learning experiences that have been missed. The clinical facilitator, with the topic coordinator, will consider each case and advise students how many missed clinical days are to be completed before the requirements of the topic can be satisfied.

**Practice on variations to entry/exit for clinical practice**

In general **no** variations to entry and exit for clinical practice are permissible. However, in exceptional circumstances (as outlined below) it may be permissible, **if possible**, to vary the entry or exit for clinical practice. For this to occur, students **must** comply with the following requirements:

1 Students must be able to demonstrate and substantiate exceptional circumstances and hardship. Examples of exceptional circumstances and hardship may include:
   - sudden illness
   - severe and sudden illness or death of a close relative
   - sudden financial hardship of the student
   - advanced pregnancy.

2 Substantiation means that students must provide written evidence (i.e. from a medical practitioner) supporting the claim of exceptional circumstances and hardship.

3 Students must be able to demonstrate and substantiate they have exhausted all other avenues that would have avoided a variation to clinical practice times.
4 In the first instance, students are to meet with the topic coordinator of the clinical as soon as practicable. Generally, it is unacceptable for students to make arrangements based on an assumption that variations in clinical time will be approved and then request topic coordinators to retrospectively approve these variations.

5 Generally, student requests of variations to clinical time will be refused if students do not adhere to the above guidelines.

6 If students have evidence that the topic coordinator has not acted in accordance with this practice, they may follow the prescribed pathway of resolving conflict by taking their case to the appropriate coordinator and, if not resolved there, to the Associate Dean (Academic Programs).

Please note:

1 Exceptional circumstances generally refer to non-foreseeable and unavoidable events such as those mentioned above (e.g. sudden severe illness).

2 Lack of planning, which could have avoided the exceptional circumstance or hardship, is the responsibility of students and shall not, prima facie, lead to acceptance of exceptional circumstances and hardship.

3 Due to circumstances beyond the control of the School of Nursing & Midwifery, it might not be possible even in cases of acceptable exceptional circumstances to vary the entry or exit for clinical practice. It has been the practice of the School of Nursing & Midwifery to look for avenues that will minimise the impact on students in such cases.

4 Variations of clinical practice time due to extensions of non-teaching periods for vacation purposes, birthdays or marriages of relatives, inability to book return flights from vacations or special flight offers are examples of non-exceptional circumstances.

While it is quite understandable that students might wish to avail themselves of such opportunities, such a wish should not be at the expense of the educational qualities of the program nor impact unfairly on the workload of staff of the School of Nursing & Midwifery and/or their clinical and industry partners.
Student concerns

Any student concerns regarding clinical facilitation, clinical experience or the venue during clinical placement need to be discussed with the clinical facilitator.

➢ Lines of communication

Students who have concerns about aspects of their clinical experience and who have appropriately consulted with the clinical facilitator or topic coordinator without satisfactory resolution, should consult with the relevant course coordinator. If the matter is still not resolved the student should consult the Associate Dean (Academic). Where appropriate and as far as is possible, student anonymity will be preserved. The student needs to refer to the University’s Student-related policies and procedures manual.