**Informational - Final / External Fieldwork Placement Payment Policy**

**Policy Framework**

The NGO Social Work Study Award programme recognises that external placements can sometimes be disruptive for both students and their employers and contributes funding to the employer towards the cost of supporting students on their “external” placement processes.

The Final Fieldwork Payment is to intended to help support students during the external placement process only – this is most often the 2nd of two placements, and so is often referred to as the "Final Placement".

MSD is responsible for making Final Placement payments to employers where the placement meets the payment requirements. This funding is intended as a contribution towards the additional costs incurred by the employer in supporting the student during their final fieldwork placement process, and may not cover all the costs incurred.

Education providers are responsible for managing placement processes – MSD plays no role in organising or approving placements.

All NGO Social Work Study Award students are expected to meet the Practicum requirements of the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB).

**The minimum expectation through making this payment is that the student is paid during their external placement process.**

**Application**

In respect of placements all social work students are expected to adhere to the SWRB policy on Practicums, which is summarised below:

* at least 2 placements
* a minimum of 120 days of field placement
* one placement must be of at least 50 days duration
* at least 100 placement days must be undertaken across the final two years of the undergraduate degree
* At least two placements should occur in differently structured settings (But also see SWRB policy requirements for internal placements).

Students may only undertake one placement in their place of employment unless these placements are in a different area of practice and / or modality within that organisation with new learning for the student. This would generally only occur if a student has changed their employment during the course of their study.

During placements students will generally work the equivalent business hours of their placement agency or work on a substantial part time basis (i.e. A minimum of 3 days per week).

All social work qualifications have at least two placement processes (i.e. The 1st & 2nd placements). As a generalisation:

* The 1st placement typically takes place earlier in the study programme - typically this takes place within the current organisation of that student. (Please see the SWRB policy requirements for internal placements).
* The 2nd placement usually takes place later in the study programme – this most often takes place outside of the current organisation of the student (i.e. This is an external placement).

Some programmes have at least 3 “placement” processes, and often there is confusion around the placement processes, including identifying which placement MSD will contribute funding towards.

MSD can only contribute funding towards an external placement process that meets the SWRB policy requirements, even if the programme requires two external placements.

In order to be funded the placement needs to meet the standard criteria for payment. This is that the placement:

* Is approved by the Education Provider
* Is external to the current place of work of the employee; and
* Meets the SWRB placement policy - see <http://www.swrb.govt.nz/policy>

In all cases MSD needs to verify the placement process and to determine whether this payment meets our criteria. This recognises that many employers and students are a little confused about the placement processes, and in some instances employers can mistakenly invoice for a payment that is not warranted.

Once the placement has commenced, and upon verification of the details of the placement, and on the basis that the placement meets all the minimum criteria for payment, then MSD will pay the employer a final placement payment. The maximum amount payable is $7,777.78 +GST = $8,944.45.

Please note that in some instances, such as where only partial back-fill is provided, and / or significantly less cost are incurred by the employer. In these instances a lesser amount may be negotiated and agreed between MSD and the employer.

Where no additional costs are incurred by the employer then no payment will be made.