

42 Placements on - Sheffield Hallam University's Hitchhiker's Guide to Galactical Placements

Colleen Smith, Anna Deans

Introduction

- 1992 Sheffield Hallam University set up a Law Clinic
- Clinical Legal Education (CLE) programme expanded - other modules include Innocence Project, Street law, Law in Practice, Law in Practice International
- New programme is clinically focussed
- Every student will have a work related learning/clinical opportunity

Pedagogic Rationale

- Beneficial to integrate learning legal rules with the learning of legal realities ACLEC Report 1996, Carnegie Report 2007
- Students' professional ability is strengthened if they develop skills at the same time as they study the law
- Sole Function is not to prepare all students for legal practice but we do need to prepare students for employment

How the Placement Module is Structured

- Operates as a Level 6 Elective
- Public and Private Institutions (National & International)
- Sourcing Placements
- Student Selection Process

Operation of Placement

- Three Way Relationship (student/tutor/supervisor)
- Attendance
- Induction
- Workshops
- Placement Visits
- Assessment
- International Placements

Who Benefits & How?

- STUDENTS
- Transferable skills
- Emotional Intelligence
- Reflection
- Theory/Practice Nexus
- Ethics
- Professionalism
- Workplace Awareness - assists with transition from University to employment

Who Benefits & How?

- THE FACULTY
- Relationships with external stakeholders
- Build clinical profile
- Cross curricular impact
- Links with tertiary sector(volunteer/community)

Who Benefits & How?

- LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDERS
- Links with the Faculty
- Pro Bono Activity
- Recruitment
- Free Workers
- Informs current legal education
- Employers input into higher education

Who Benefits & How?

- CLIENTS
- Community Engagement
- Increased efficiency
- Contribute to pro bono initiatives

Conflicts of Interest In House Clinics v Placements

- Client v Education
- Cost
- Control part of the curriculum
- Academic v Practical Debate
- Sustainability cuts in HE

Challenges of Placements & How to Overcome Them

- Sourcing
- Sustainability
- Supervision
- Overwhelming students
- Assessment
- Quality Assurance - uniformity of experience
- Reflection

Challenges of Placement & How to Overcome Them

- Placement Supervisors/Tutors
- Confidentiality
- Calibre of Students
- Preparation for placement

Why Placements May be the Solution to the Conflict

- Cost/resource
- Less risk
- More sustainable
- Holistic picture of professional practice
- Commercial Awareness
- Informs career choice
- Diversity

Why Placements May be the Solution to the Conflict

- Supportive environment, develops student's ability to work with all levels in an organisation
- More client focussed
- Faster Pace
- More realistic
- More exposure to clients and other lawyering skills
- Observe links practitioners have with external agencies/professionals

Conclusion

- Any Questions?