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Rationale and background

An International Placement in the MScPT or MScOT Program is an optional way to achieve course credit for one of the required placements in the respective programs. It is recognized that International Placements provide students with a unique opportunity to develop clinical skills, while also combining learning in the areas of global education and cultural diversity. That being said, the safety of all students on an international clinical placement is of paramount importance and the University has a responsibility to help manage the risks associated with International Placements.

This document sets out the necessary steps that must be followed by Queen's University and the School of Rehabilitation Therapy (SRT) to demonstrate due diligence prior to making a decision in regards to a Queen's SRT student participating in an International Placement opportunity.

Scope of policy

For the purposes of this policy, "Placement" refers to Community Development Placements in the OT Program, Clinical Fieldwork Placements in the OT Program, and Clinical Placements in the PT Program.

These guidelines were prepared to assist in the understanding and administration of International Placements, and apply to Physical Therapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) students from the SRT, Queen's University. The opportunity to participate in an International Placement is considered to be a privilege which may be negotiated for a second year student with good academic standing, who has a record of excellent performance in all previous clinical placements.

Policy statements

To be considered for a placement outside of Canada, a student must be approved by the Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy Program. Conditions for eligibility:

1. A student must be in their final year of the program in order to participate in an International Placement.
2. A student may participate in only one International Placement (with the exception of OT 862 and/or OT 877)
3. A letter of intent and two references (one from a clinical instructor/preceptor and one from a faculty member) must be submitted by the student.
4. The student must maintain a minimum overall grade point average of 80%, without exception. This standing must be maintained until the commencement of the International Placement.
5. The student must have progressed through the program with no conditions, concerns, or course failures.

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6. The student must complete the “Acknowledgement of Risk” form, a “Student Code of Conduct Form” and a “Higher-Risk” Off Campus Activity Safety Policy (OCASP) online submission. Completion of the pre-departure orientation, part of the on-line OCASP process, is mandatory..
7. There must be favourable consensus from both the respective academic and clinical faculty that the student demonstrates professional behaviour in both academic and clinical situations (e.g., independence, maturity).
8. A signed affiliation agreement with the international site must be in place, prior to confirmation of the placement.
9. For “Level 2” countries [“Exercise high degree of caution”, according to Global Affairs Canada] students may be required to travel in pairs.
10. For “Level 2” countries (Global Affairs Canada), the International Placement Committee in the SRT must approve the country and/or region of interest. Applications must be submitted to the ACCE/FC before the deadline (identified each year).

Procedures

1. Normal Steps in Securing an International Placement
 - a. See Appendix A for Clinical/Fieldwork Placements
 - b. See Appendix B for Community Development Placements

Note: A student must be prepared to accept a placement in the Queen’s catchment area in the event of cancellation of the International Placement.

The School of Rehabilitation Therapy cannot guarantee the cooperation of foreign institutions should students require accommodations while on an International Placement. Although we can assist in communicating needs to international institutions, not all countries possess human rights legislation that would compel an institution to provide appropriate accommodations, including accommodations for human rights related grounds such as disability or faith requirements, etc. Please be aware that the SRT also offers several local options to gaining the necessary credits for completion of the MScPT or MScOT degree.

2. Location of the Placements
 - a. The SRT has established relationships with a variety of International Placement partners. Students will be informed of these opportunities through the Academic Clinical Coordinator of Education (ACCE) or Fieldwork Coordinator (FC). Students may seek placements with facilities other than those with pre-existing relationships with the SRT.
 - b. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to participate in a placement in a country deemed a “Level 3 (Avoid non-essential travel) or Level 4 (Avoid all travel)” by Global Affairs Canada.

3. Timing and Duration

Students should refer to their program specific guidelines for information about placement timing and duration.