

Practical Work Handbook



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Diploma in Farm Management



Things grow when the conditions are right.

This is true for industry and agriculture, and it's most certainly true for people. At Lincoln University, helping you to grow is what we're all about.

And we encourage you to do it your way, with diverse learning options that fit your ambitions in an environment that allows you to flourish.

We partner you with industry to prepare you for the real world and to plant the seeds of a rewarding future.

So when the time comes, you're ready to go out there and grow the future for yourself and others.

**Welcome to Lincoln University.
A place to grow.**



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Practical Work Handbook

Diploma of Farm Management

Practical Work is essential to the Diploma in Farm Management as it allows you to gain hands-on work experience in a range of industries.

After completing your Practical Work, you will need to write a descriptive reports about your experience. There are report guidelines in this handbook to help you with this.

You are expected to keep a daily work diary to record why, when, and how you carry out your tasks. Ask your mentor or employer to sign the diary when you finish your employment period.

Familiarise yourself with this handbook, as you will need to refer to it throughout your diploma.

If you want to discuss any aspect of Practical Work, contact the Practical Work Co-ordinator in the Student Administration area or email practicalwork@lincoln.ac.nz



For enquiries relating to Practical Work please contact:

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Why Practical Work?

Practical Work will:

-
- **Complement your studies and enhance the marketability of your qualification**
-
- **Provide you with an opportunity to experience new learning environments**
-
- **Expose you to the appropriate industry environment, including its technical, economic and social environments**
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- **Teach you to perform a range of tasks specific to the industry environment including skills in observation, information-gathering, data analysis, and report writing**
-
- **Equip you with more knowledge of industry employment opportunities.**
-



Note: Your daily work diary will be an invaluable resource when you come to compile your report. Remember to record why, when and how tasks are performed.

Practical Work Requirements

Before graduating, you will need to complete a total of 44 weeks of Practical Work on at least two different types of farm. You must work for a minimum of 22 weeks consecutively on one of these properties. The remaining weeks can be worked on one or more properties, as long as there is a minimum of four weeks in any workplace.

You may use the same properties that you have worked on for the Diploma in Agriculture as long as the total number of weeks is more than 56.

You must submit one satisfactory Practical Work report to the Practical Work Co-ordinator by 25 July of the year that you complete the work period. An employer form verifying the work period also needs to be handed in with the report.

The guidelines for the report, and the employer forms, are contained in this handbook.

Practical Work Guidelines

Any appropriate work that you have completed since leaving secondary school may be considered for Practical Work credit. If you are unsure if what you have done is suitable please discuss it with the Practical Work Co-ordinator.

Practical Work must take place on a commercial enterprise. Use the following categories as a guideline.

If you have a property with a small number of stock units, please discuss this with the Practical Work Office before accepting a position. Smaller farms can often give a very good learning experience, so please check.

- Sheep properties – evaluated on a case-by-case basis but there must be enough ewes or equivalents in finishing stock to make it a worthwhile learning experience
- Dairy – as above
- Beef – as above
- Deer – as above
- Crop properties – must be at least 40 ha, with at least two cash crops
- Equine properties – must be a commercially viable horse enterprise and if the property is part of another farm, it needs to generate at least 40% of the total income
- Finishing properties – must be a commercially viable unit
- Dairy support properties – must be a commercially viable unit
- Allied industry – examples include agricultural seed or fertiliser businesses, research and development, or rural banking
- Fruit production – examples include pip fruit, summer/stone fruit, berries, grapes, nuts, citrus, sub-tropical fruit
- Vegetable production – outdoor or protected.



Note: You may not undertake 'labour only' contracts (such as shearing, fencing or truck driving) or work for a contractor or contracting business.

Securing Practical Work

You are responsible for finding your own positions but the Practical Work Co-ordinator has some industry contacts who advertise vacancies on the LEARN site each year. You are strongly advised to seek out a diverse range of Practical Work opportunities to increase your knowledge of the industry.

Your Practical Work position must comply with the regulations in this handbook and the University Calendar.

If you have found a position but aren't sure if it is suitable, check with the Practical Work Co-ordinator before accepting it.



Note: If there is some reason why you are unable to carry out your Practical Work, please see the Practical Work Co-ordinator as early as possible in your course of study.

Where to Find Practical Work

To find out about available Practical Work positions, see the Practical Work page on your LEARN site or visit the Practical Work Office.

Positions will be advertised as they arrive, usually from June onwards.

You can also find your own work using other contacts if you wish. If you are not sure about some aspects of the work offered, call in and discuss it with the Practical Work Co-ordinator.



Note: All employment contract negotiations must take place between you and the prospective employer.

Applying for Practical Work

It's best to apply for more than one position. Before phoning a contact for Practical Work, be prepared to answer questions about your work experience, when you can start and finish, and the rate of pay. The employer may ask for a Cover Letter and Curriculum Vitae.

Assistance with job applications

If you need extra help preparing your CV or cover letters, please contact Michelle Ash through CareerHub, as her team are very helpful with this.

Your Work Experience

Be very honest about the amount of experience you have had to avoid problems later on. Take the initiative and ask questions if directions are unclear. Ask your employer for a weekly meeting so you can check your progress and make sure you are meeting each other's expectations.

If you have any special requirements, such as health or dietary needs or time off, make sure the employer is aware of these before you arrive.

Before starting work, ask your employer what you need to bring. They may recommend gumboots, wet weather gear, and warm and cool clothing. You should also bring:

- A copy of the report writing guidelines from this handbook (give these to the employer when you arrive so they know the kind of information they will need to provide you with)
- An employer record form, to be signed before you leave
- Your Practical Work diary, to keep a record of the tasks you carry out.

Failure to Secure Practical Work

If you don't succeed in securing Practical Work, please see the Practical Work Co-ordinator well before the end of the semester.

Keep copies of application letters and replies you have received, as well as a record of telephone calls you made when seeking work (including the person contacted) and the responses.

Recognition of Previous Practical Work

You can apply to have appropriate previous work credited to your Practical Work requirements at Lincoln University. This only applies to work that you have completed since finishing high school. Contact the Practical Work Co-ordinator for details.

Overseas Practical Experience

If you would like to undertake some of your Practical Work experience in a country other than New Zealand, please discuss this with the Practical Work Co-ordinator. Normally, no more than half of the required work may be completed overseas.

Carrying Out Practical Work

Roles and Responsibilities

Before starting each Practical Work position, you should meet with the employer to make sure that you both have a clear understanding of the requirements of your role.

It is useful to give an employer a copy of the specific report requirements so you can initiate a conversation about the workplace and they give them an understanding of the type of information they will need to supply you with.

You should be asked to sign an employment contract. A contract is a legal document and you must understand all the terms and conditions, so please read it carefully before signing it. Ask the employer to email you a copy so your parents or other interested parties can see it.

Make sure you take part in a Health and Safety Induction with your employer before you commence work.

Professional conduct is expected from both employers and employees.

Please be aware at all times of privacy, confidentiality and professional ethics in relation to your employers and co-workers.



Keeping yourself safe

You must be provided with a safe environment at all times when carrying out your practical work activities. Please be sure to:

- Comply with all safety instructions issued by your supervisor
- Remove yourself from any dangerous practices, situations, environments or behaviours immediately
- Report any unsafe conditions to your supervisor as soon as possible
- Ensure that you are familiar with emergency procedures at the workplace
- Ask about the locations of first aid kits and emergency equipment

If you are unsure about anything that is affecting your safety and well-being please have a confidential discussion with the Practical Work Coordinator.

Problems on the Job

If you encounter any problems during your employment which make it difficult to remain in your position, please let the Practical Work Co-ordinator know as soon as possible.

Recording Practical Work

You must submit Practical Work Record Sheets (see Appendix) that have been verified by your employer. You will need a separate sheet for each period of work.

Please make sure the record sheets are signed by both parties.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you present your Practical Work Record Sheets to the employer for completion and then return them to the Practical Work Co-ordinator.

Check your Practical Work file with the office at least once each year, particularly during the last semester before final examinations, to make sure you have completed the necessary tasks.

Report Guidelines

The report is structured to ensure that you can:

- Describe and analyse the structure and processes of the farm or business, and
- Present a report in a format suitable for consideration by clients.

Presentation

You must present the report as a hard copy with a cover page that includes the diploma and report type (e.g. Sheep and Beef Practical Work Report, your name, ID number, postal and email addresses). You can include photos if you wish, but check with the owner beforehand.

Use A4 pages, which should be printed double-sided. Stapling the pages together is preferred but plastic binding is acceptable, especially if you wish to keep the report for future reference.

Deadline

While you are studying, you must submit your completed report and employer record to the Practical Work Co-ordinator by 25 July each year.

Assessment

The criteria for assessment emphasises the importance placed on the ability to research, analyse and report. You will need to submit your reports to Turnitin on the LEARN Practical Work page, as well as hand in copies to the Practical Work office.

Unsatisfactory reports will need to be corrected and presented for reassessment.

Return of Reports

You will receive an email notification about when you can collect your report. Any reports not collected will be kept for six months and then confidentially disposed of.

Graduating Students

If you have any outstanding reports, the final submission date for these is 20 February in the year that you intend to graduate. However, if you would like an opportunity to resubmit a failed report, it must be received by 1 February of your intended graduation year.



Note: If you submit your Practical Work documentation after 20 February in the year in which you are to graduate, you will not be able to attend the ceremony that year.

Diploma in Farm Management Report Format

You must write a descriptive report and include titled diagrams, graphs and illustrations as appropriate. This report should describe the property's resources and systems.

The report must have a title page, showing the property's (or owner's) name, the student's name and the date.

Include a farm map in the appendix of the report.

Section 1: Property Report

1.1 Introduction

Describe:

- The property/business name and ownership
- Total area and effective area
- Tenure
- Farm type
- Location.

1.2 Climate

Describe:

- Rainfall and seasonal distribution
- Wind
- Temperature ranges
- Winter conditions.

1.3 Land

Describe:

- Topography, including aspect and altitude
- Soil types, water-holding capacities, fertility status, recommended maintenance for fertiliser and actual applications
- Land use and cover (tabulated if appropriate)
- Weeds and pests
- Subdivision and access.

1.4 Water

Describe:

- Domestic supplies (source and reticulation)
- Irrigation system/s and source of water (if applicable)
- Drainage (if applicable).

1.5 Trees

Describe the planted shelter, planted forestry and amenity plantings.

1.6 Buildings

Describe:

- The main buildings, with a description of their condition and adequacy
- Electricity, phone and broadband services.

1.7 Environmental Compliance

Include:

- Consultancy company used
- Current N leaching figure
- 2013/2014 baseline (if applicable)
- 2018/2019 baseline
- N leaching target
- District / Group
- Major environmental impact
- Main mitigation strategies
- Other comments.

Section 2: The Farm System

2.1 Introduction

Describe the property/business system currently operated.

2.2 Stock

Describe:

- The type, class, breed and numbers of stock (tabulate if appropriate)
- Replacement and or trading policies
- Production and performance data, with comparisons to last year's data
- Animal health programmes and livestock pests and diseases
- Marketing of stock and produce.

2.3 Pastures

Describe:

- Areas of different pastures – main species, age and quality
- Seasonal growth pattern, total DM produced, grazing rotations, supplementary feed harvested
- Re-grassing programmes.

2.4 Cropping (if relevant)

Describe:

- The areas of arable cash crops and forage crops grown (tabulate if appropriate)
- Yields and performance data – with comparisons to last year's data
- Crop rotation, sowing and harvest dates, marketing.

2.5 Labour and Machinery

List:

- The number of permanent, casual and contract labour employees
- The items of plant and machinery on the property and describe their condition and adequacy.

Section 3: Goals and Objectives

This section of the report allows you to show your understanding of the overall management system.

You should demonstrate critical thinking when defining objectives and the options for managing and achieving them, taking all options into consideration.

Remember that objectives must be specific, quantifiable and have associated timeframes.

3.1 Overall Business Goal

Define the overall (main) goal for the property manager/owner.

3.2 Objectives

List and define three significant management objectives for the property/owner/manager.

This could include:

- Production and/or profitability improvements
- Change of land use
- Succession (inter-generational transfer)
- Change of breed and/or improvement of genetic merit
- Any other appropriate issues.

3.3 Achieving an Objective

Choose one of the objectives described in 3.2 above and explain how this could be managed and achieved.

You could undertake a SWOT analysis as part of this, which needs to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, potential opportunities and threats to the enterprise and its development.

Include any issues that may restrict the enterprise in any way, both now and in the future, e.g. labour, climate, financial issues (availability of capital, profitability) etc.

This analysis may be summarised on one page but you must provide elaborating explanations and comments to show that you have a comprehensive understanding of the various issues.

Farm Map

The map is an important part of the Farm Management Report, as it allows the reader to visualise the property, and can be used as a reference for many resources described in the Property Report. You must identify all the main features.

You can draw the map yourself, produce it using internet-based technology or base it on aerial photography.

The map must include buildings, property boundaries, significant physical features and anything else directly relevant to operating the business.

It must also show road access to the property and the location in relation to the district and nearest business centre.

Appendices

Any supporting information for your report may be included in Appendices.

Allied Industry Report Format

After completing allied industry Practical Work, you must write a three-part report. Include titled diagrams, graphs and illustrations as appropriate.

The report must have a title page, showing the property's (or owner's) name, the student's name and the date.

Section 1: General Description

The General Description section should include:

- The name and location of the business you worked in
- A description of the type of business and nature of the work you conducted
- An outline of the ownership structure of the business
- The objectives of the business (mission statement, goals and objectives)
- A description and illustration of the chain of command of the business (i.e. the management structure).

Production and Marketing Activities

Describe:

- The role the business plays in the agricultural industry
- The products and services provided by the business, and their contribution to the business portfolio
- How the business meets the market's needs.

Labour

Include:

- A description of the personnel policy of the business
- A diagram showing the number of employees and positions, categorised into permanent, casual (seasonal) or part-time (for example, regular but works only mornings or two days a week)
- A discussion on recruitment of new employees
- An outline of any training programmes provided for new employees.

Section 2: Management Analysis

In this section, you should summarise the business objectives and goals and describe how well they are being met. Undertake a SWOT analysis focused on the management and performance of the business to identify any issues or opportunities that could lead to an option or options for improvement in the current system.

You do not need to cover all areas described in the previous sections, but use these to guide your thinking.

For example, with reference to Section 1 and business ownership, comment on how this influences the management of the business. Comment on the appropriateness of this ownership structure, and any change that could improve this factor.

Other areas you could consider include the following:

- Products, marketing and purchasing: the appropriateness of the business's product range, the success of any marketing strategy, processes for determining prices, the supply contracts situation, the purchasing policy for inputs, or ways of producing goods and services that could be considered novel
- A financial commentary covering the sources of income and their relative contributions, and the value of the businesses assets
- Staffing: the influence of employee training programmes on managerial efficiency, innovative techniques to incentivise staff to perform to a higher level
- Potential major risks to the business operation, identifying how these could be managed
- Areas you believe could be improved, such as systems or staffing practices.



Note: Any criticisms should be kept professional and not denigrating to individuals or the business.

Section 3: Evidence Portfolio and Reflective Log

In the first part of this section, you should illustrate the nature of the work you have undertaken through the following:

- A brief description of the major activities or tasks that you have performed during your time at work
- Choose two significant activities or tasks that you have carried out, describe each activity or task and your contribution, provide relevant dates, e.g. daily, every other week, or a one-off activity or task
- Provide evidence of the personal attributes and employability skills that you have acquired during your employment, referring to your two chosen activities or tasks previously described.

The personal attributes and employability skills fit within six core competencies defined below:

- Communication – written, verbal, group discussion, oral presentation, ability to read, synthesise and, if necessary, disseminate information
- Working with others – team working, planning a complex task with others, reviewing work with others, establishing and maintaining effective working relationships
- Using and applying numbers – ability to collect and interpret data, perform calculations, interpret results and justify methods
- Problem solving – explore a complex problem and produce options for solving it, plan and implement at least one option for solving the problem, review progress and revise approach, solve the problem
- Using IT – plan and use different resources, explore, develop and exchange information, present the task using IT methods

- Improving own learning and performance and professionalism – demonstrate time management, agree task targets and plan meeting targets, meet targets by planning and seeking feedback and support, review progress; work independently, demonstrate motivation, demonstrate reliability, demonstrate accuracy, demonstrate flexibility, show integrity, demonstrate self-development.

In the second part of this section, you should reflect on your workplace experience by answering the following questions:

- What did you learn from your employment and how useful was the employment to your future career plans?
- What was your personal contribution to the business?
- How have the different activities and tasks undertaken contributed to your knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal attributes? What attributes and skills have you gained or developed and which ones do you perform well? What do you need to do to develop these further and gain new skills?
- What advice or suggestions would you give to this business? This may be something to change in terms of day-to-day operations, or a longer-term strategic change.

Appendices

Include any supporting information for your report as a section of the appendices.

Farm-Support Rural Contractors Report Format

After completing rural contractor practical work, you must write a three-part report. Include titled diagrams, graphs and illustrations as appropriate.

The report must have a title page, showing the business's (or owner's) name, the student's name and the date.

Section 1: General Description

The General Description section should include:

- The name and location of the business you worked in.
- A description of the type of business and nature of the work conducted.
- An outline of the ownership structure of the business (diagram where appropriate).
- The objectives of the business (mission statement, goals and objectives).
- A description and illustration of the chain of command of the business (i.e. the management structure).
- Describe the type of farms you typically worked on and the climatic conditions influencing them (such as rainfall, altitude, aspect, soils etc.). Discuss if these factors had any impact on the contracting business e.g. timing of work, speed of work etc.

Production and Marketing Activities

Describe:

- The role the business plays in the agricultural industry.
- The activities, products and services provided by the business, and their contribution to the business portfolio.
- How the business meets the market's needs.

- The assets of the business (if machinery based), list and describe and comment on condition, adequacy, maintenance and replacement policies.
- The seasonality of the business (if seasonal) how does this affect the business and how is it managed.

Labour

Include:

- A description of the personnel policy of the business.
- A diagram showing the number of employees and positions, categorised into permanent, casual (seasonal) or part-time (regular but work only mornings or two days a week, etc).
- A discussion on recruitment of new employees.
- An outline of any training programmes provided for new employees.

Section 2: Management Analysis

In this section, you should summarise the business objectives and goals and describe how well they are being met. Undertake a SWOT analysis focused on the management and performance of the business to identify any issues or opportunities that could lead to an option or options for improvement in the current system.

You do not need to cover all areas described in the previous sections, but use these to guide your thinking.

For example, with reference to Section 1 and business ownership, comment on how this influences management of the business. Comment on the appropriateness of this ownership structure, and any change that could improve this factor.

Other areas you could consider include the following:

- Activities & offerings, advertising, networking and purchasing: the appropriateness of the business's range of services, the success of any advertising strategy, processes for determining prices, supply contracts situation, purchasing policy for inputs, how they network and collaborate with other industry players such as transport companies or consultants, ways of completing work that could be considered novel.
- A financial commentary covering the sources of income and their relative contributions, and the value of the businesses assets – if this information is available.
- Staffing: the influence of employee training programmes on managerial efficiency, innovative techniques to incentivise staff to perform to a higher level.
- Potential major risks to the business operation, identifying how these could be managed.
- Areas you believe could be improved on, such as systems or staffing practices.



Note: Any criticisms should be kept professional and not denigrating to individuals or the business.

Section 3: Evidence Portfolio and Reflective Log

In the first part of this section you should illustrate the nature of the work you have undertaken through the following:

- A brief description of the major activities or tasks that you have performed during your time at work.
- Choose two significant activities or tasks that you have carried out, describe each activity or task and your contribution, provide relevant dates, e.g. daily, every other week, or a one off activity or task.

- Provide evidence of the personal attributes and employability skills acquired/developed during your employment referring to your two chosen activities or tasks previously described.

The personal attributes and employability skills fit within six core competencies defined below:

- Communication – written, verbal, group discussion, oral presentation, ability to read, synthesise and, if necessary, disseminate information.
- Working with others – team working, planning a complex task with others, reviewing work with others, establishing and maintaining effective working relationships.
- Using and applying numbers – ability to collect and interpret data, perform calculations, interpret results and justify methods.
- Problem solving – explore a complex problem and produce options for solving it, plan and implement at least one option for solving the problem, review progress and revise approach, solve the problem.
- Using IT – plan and use different resources, explore, develop and exchange information, present the task using IT methods.
- Improving own learning and performance and professionalism – demonstrate time management, agree task targets and plan meeting targets, meet targets by planning and seeking feedback and support, review progress; work independently, demonstrate motivation, demonstrate reliability, demonstrate accuracy, demonstrate flexibility, show integrity, demonstrate self-development.

In the second part of this section, you should reflect upon your workplace experience by answering the following questions:

- What did you learn from your employment and how useful was the employment to your future career plans?
- What was your personal contribution to the business?
- How have the different activities and tasks undertaken contributed to your knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal attributes? In relation to these what attributes and skills have you gained or developed and of these which do you perform well? What do you need to do to develop these further and develop new skills?
- What advice or suggestions would you give to this business? This may be something to change in terms of day to day operations, or a longer term strategic change.

Appendices

Include any supporting information for your report as a section of the appendices.

Lincoln University Practical Work Record Sheet



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Complete a separate sheet for each period of work

Student Details

Student ID	
Student Name	
Email	
Telephone	
Home Address	

Employer Details

Name of Business/ Enterprise	
Owners' Full Name	
Telephone	
Employer Address	

Practical Work Details

Work category (tick)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheep	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheep/beef	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dairy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crop	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finishing
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Beef	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dairy Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Equine	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contracting
	<input type="checkbox"/> Allied industry (Specify)									
Farm size (ha)										
	Stock numbers			Cash crops			Area ha			
Sheep				Small seeds						
Dairy cows				Greenfeed						
Beef cows				Peas						
Deer				Wheat						
Dairy support				Barley						
Equine				Other						

Employment Details

Dates	From	/	/	To	/	/
Number of weeks worked						
Employer name						
Employer signature					Date	
Student signature					Date	

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Complete a separate sheet for each period of work

Student Details

Student ID	
Student Name	
Email	
Telephone	
Home Address	

Employer Details

Name of Business/ Enterprise	
Owners' Full Name	
Telephone	
Employer Address	

Practical Work Details

Work category (tick)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheep	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheep/beef	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dairy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crop	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finishing
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Beef	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dairy Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Equine	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contracting
	<input type="checkbox"/> Allied industry (Specify)									
Farm size (ha)										
	Stock numbers			Cash crops			Area ha			
Sheep				Small seeds						
Dairy cows				Greenfeed						
Beef cows				Peas						
Deer				Wheat						
Dairy support				Barley						
Equine				Other						

Employment Details

Dates	From	/	/	To	/	/
Number of weeks worked						
Employer name						
Employer signature				Date		
Student signature				Date		



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