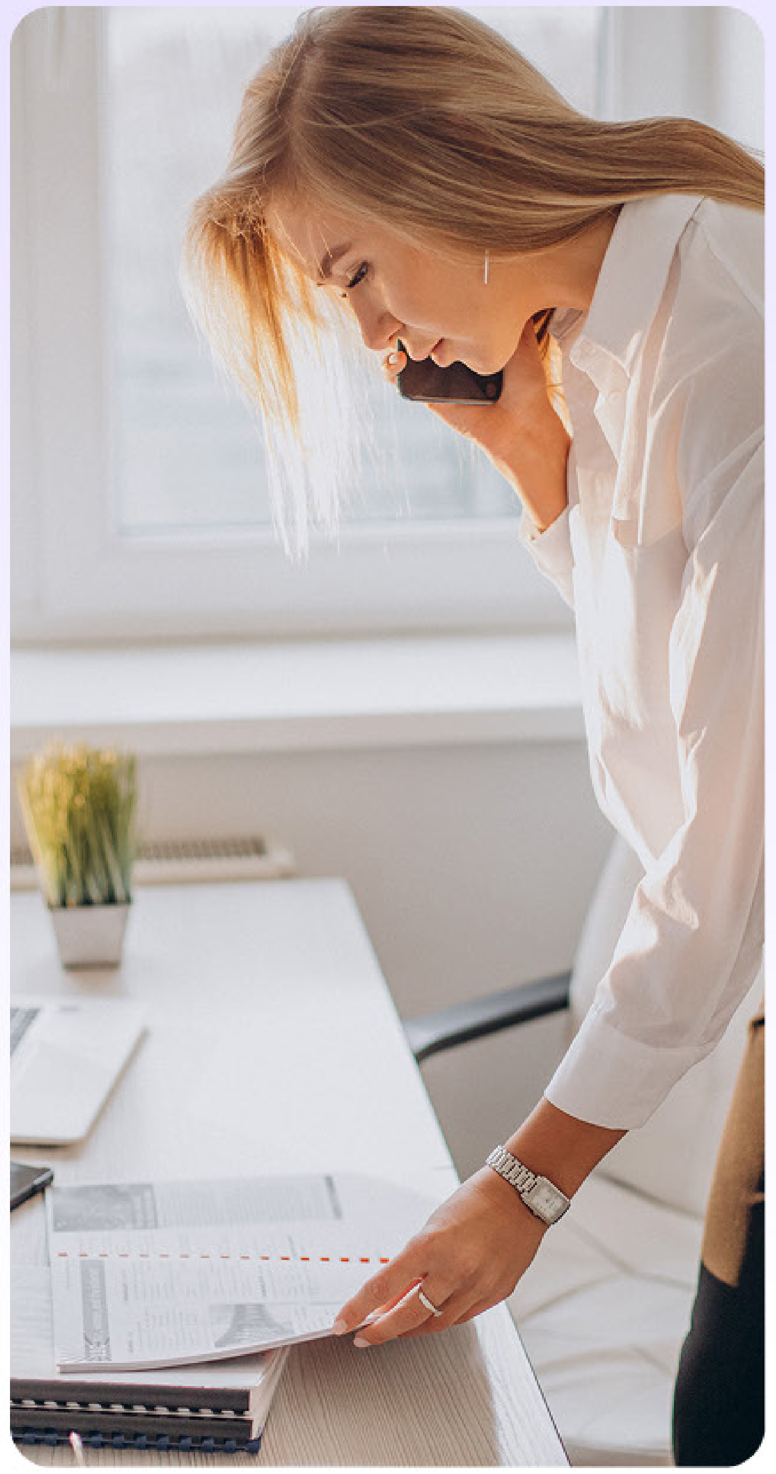
NPHUB

What University Leaders Should Measure When Evaluating a Clinical Placement Partner



🎯 Purpose

Selecting a clinical placement partner is not just an operational decision; it's a cross-functional institutional decision.

It impacts:

- 📌 **Clinical placement teams** (execution & workflow)
- 💸 **Finance teams** (cost predictability & risk)
- 🔒 **IT & security** (data protection & system integration)
- 📄 **Legal** (contract structure & liability)
- 🎓 **Academic leadership** (student outcomes & program growth)

This guide outlines the key metrics and signals university leaders should evaluate, and how to distinguish between strong and weak partners.

1. Placement Visibility & Reporting

📈 What to Measure

- ✓ Real-time visibility into placement status
- ✓ Number of active placements vs committed placements
- ✓ Fill rates by specialty, geography, and timeframe

⭐ Why It Matters

Leaders need to understand:

- ✓ Where students are placed
- ✓ Where gaps exist
- ✓ How performance trends over time

⚙️ Evaluation Framework

✅ Great Answer

The partner provides **real-time dashboards** with up-to-date placement data

→ ***Rationale:***

If data is tracked in real time, it means the partner is actively managing performance, not reacting to it

❌ Weak Answer

Limited or delayed reporting

→ ***Rationale:***

Lack of visibility introduces risk and limits your ability to plan or intervene

⚠️ Good Answer

The partner can provide reports upon request

→ ***Rationale:***

Data exists, but if it must be pulled manually, it suggests it's not reviewed consistently

2. Cost Transparency & Forecasting

📈 **What to Measure**

- ✓ Cost per placement (clear, consistent definition)
- ✓ Ability to forecast costs based on enrollment
- ✓ Visibility into spend vs commitment

⭐ **Why It Matters**

Finance teams must:

- ✓ Budget accurately
- ✓ Avoid unexpected overage
- ✓ Justify the investment internally

⚙️ **Evaluation Framework**

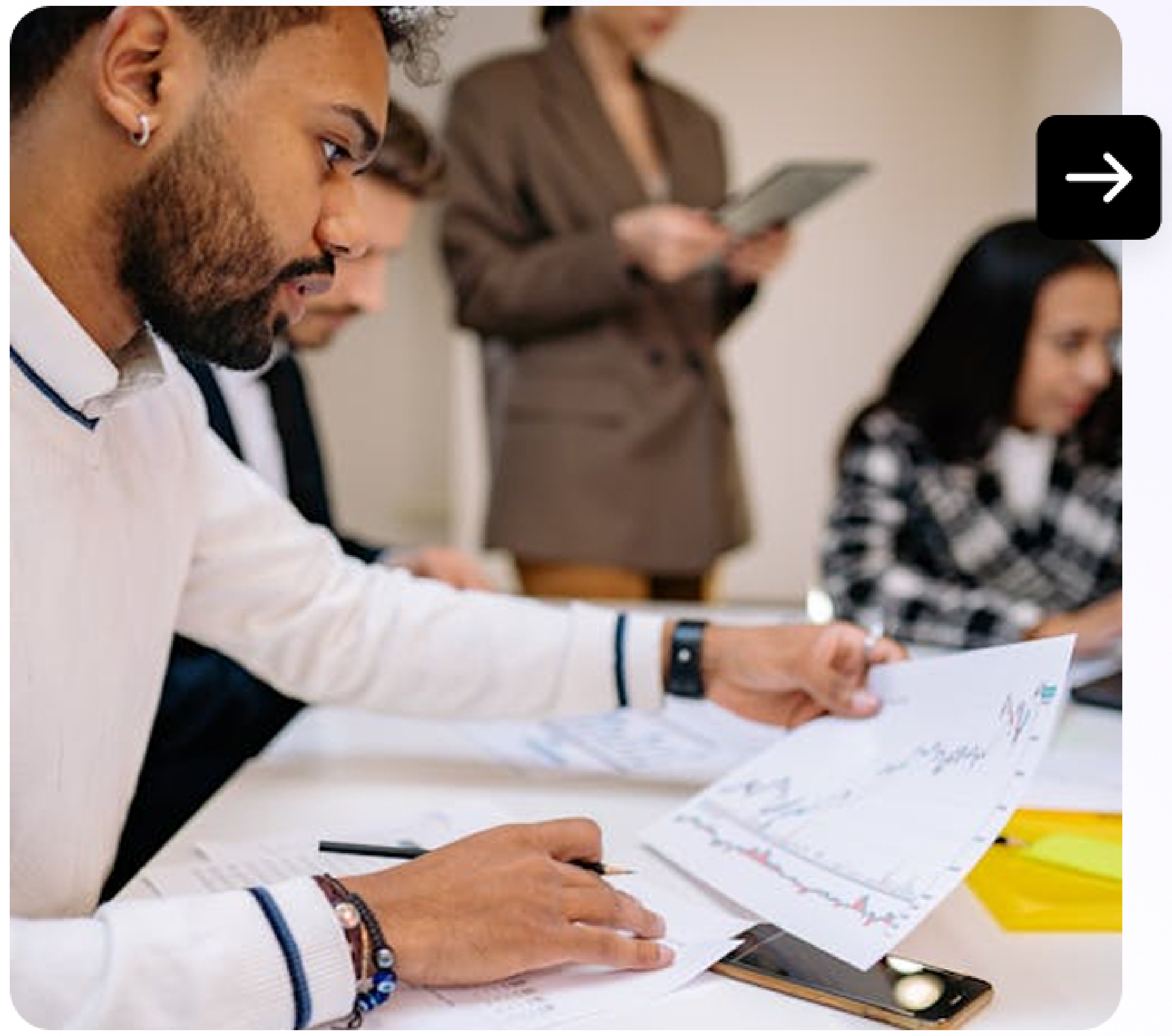
✅

Great Answer

Clear cost model with **forward-looking projections and real-time tracking**

➔ ***Rationale:***

Indicates the partner understands institutional budgeting needs and supports planning



⚠️

Good Answer

Clear pricing, but limited forecasting support

➔ ***Rationale:***

You can understand cost, but must model it yourself

❌

Weak Answer

Ambiguous pricing or inconsistent definitions (e.g., hours vs placements)

➔ ***Rationale:***

Creates confusion and slows approval

3. Risk Management
(Shortfall, Flexibility, Contingencies)

📈 What to Measure

- ✓ Policies for unused placements (shortfall, rollover, flexibility)
- ✓ Replacement processes for failed placements
- ✓ Ability to adapt to enrollment variability

⭐ Why It Matters

Risk is often the **primary barrier to approval.**

Leaders need confidence that:

- ✓ They won't overpay for unused capacity
- ✓ Issues will be resolved quickly

⚙️ Evaluation Framework

✅

Great Answer

Clearly defined **risk mitigation structures** (e.g., rollover options, defined replacement processes)

→ ***Rationale:***

Shows the partner has designed for real-world variability

⚠️

Good Answer

Standard policies exist but limited flexibility

→ ***Rationale:***

Acceptable, but may not align with institutional needs

❌

Weak Answer

Rigid contracts with unclear contingency handling

→ ***Rationale:***

High financial and operational risk

4. Preceptor Network **Quality & Stability**

📈 What to Measure

- ✓ Number and distribution of active preceptors/clinics
- ✓ Retention and repeat usage of preceptors
- ✓ Ability to support hard-to-place specialties

⭐ Why It Matters

The strength of the network directly impacts:

- ✓ Placement reliability
- ✓ Student experience
- ✓ Program scalability

⚙️ Evaluation Framework

❌

Weak Answer

Unclear or inconsistent network data

→ ***Rationale:***
Signals risk in fulfillment

✅

Great Answer

Demonstrated **consistent placement volume and repeat preceptor engagement**

→ ***Rationale:***
Indicates a stable, trusted network

⚠️

Good Answer

Adequate network with some variability

→ ***Rationale:***
May work, but less predictable

5. Workflow Integration & Operational Fit

📈 What to Measure

- How the partner integrates with your existing workflow
- Division of responsibilities between teams
- Communication and escalation processes

⭐ Why It Matters

Operational friction can quickly outweigh perceived value.

⚙️ Evaluation Framework

✅

Great Answer

Clearly defined workflows that **complement existing processes**

→ ***Rationale:***

Reduces burden on internal teams

❌

Weak Answer

Requires significant process changes or unclear ownership

→ ***Rationale:***

Increases workload and risk

⚠️

Good Answer

Basic process alignment with some manual coordination required

→ ***Rationale:***

Usable, but less efficient

6. IT, Security & Compliance

📈 What to Measure

- ✓ SOC 2 compliance
- ✓ Data handling and storage practices
- ✓ Integration capabilities (API, systems access)

⭐ Why It Matters

For IT and security teams, this is not optional.

- ✓ **SOC 2 compliance** signals that the partner meets industry standards for handling sensitive data
- ✓ For non-IT stakeholders, this may appear as a checkbox
- ✓ For IT teams, it represents confidence that **student data is secure and properly managed**

⚙️ Evaluation Framework

✅

Great Answer

SOC 2 compliant with clearly documented **data security practices and integration capabilities**

→ ***Rationale:***

Demonstrates maturity in handling sensitive institutional data

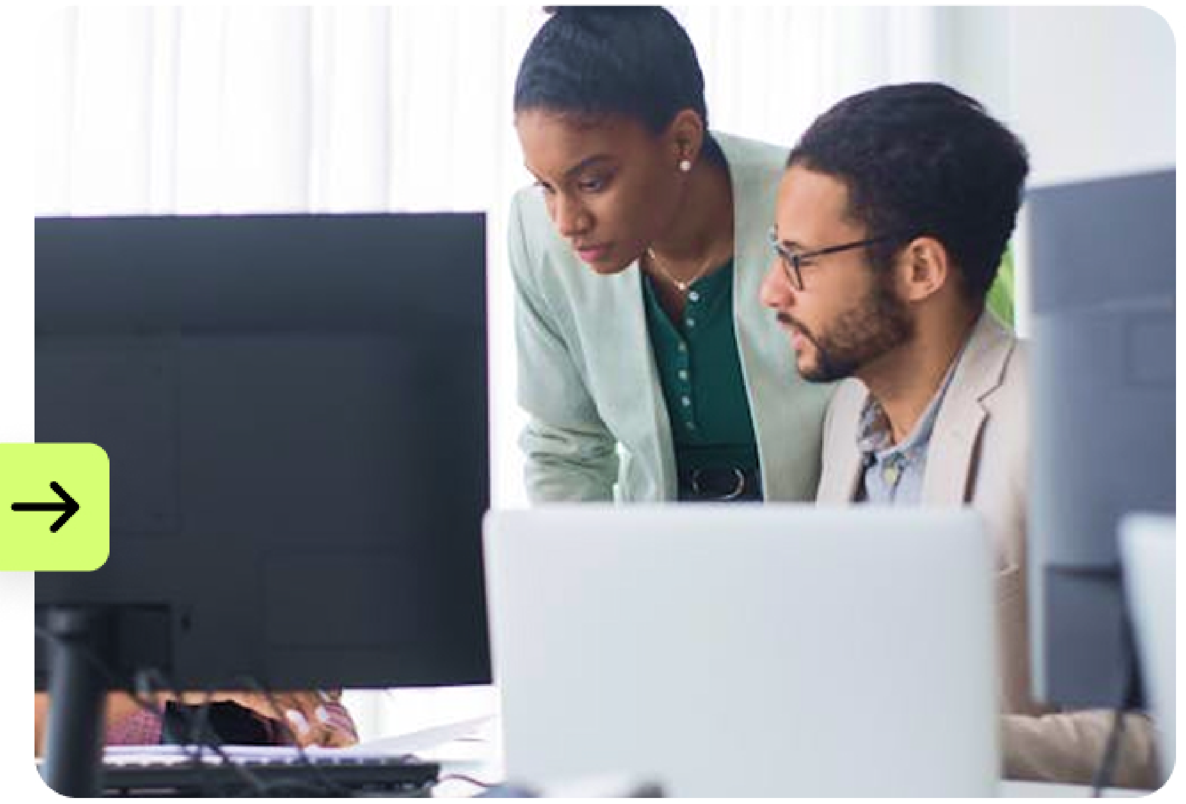
⚠️

Good Answer

Basic security measures in place, but limited formal certification

→ ***Rationale:***

May require additional review or risk assessment



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Weak Answer

No clear security framework or documentation

→ ***Rationale:***

Significant institutional risk

7. Contract Clarity & Legal Alignment

📈 What to Measure

- Transparency of contract terms
- Flexibility in agreement structure
- Clarity around obligations and liabilities

⭐ Why It Matters

Legal review often becomes a bottleneck.

⚙️ Evaluation Framework

❌ Weak Answer

Standard agreements with some ambiguity

→ ***Rationale:***

May require additional legal cycles

✅ Great Answer

Clear, transparent agreements with defined terms and flexibility where appropriate

→ ***Rationale:***

Speeds approval and reduces negotiation friction

⚠️ Good Answer

Complex or unclear contract structure

→ ***Rationale:***

Slows or blocks approval

Final Takeaway

- ✓ **Visibility** into performance
- ✓ **Predictability** in cost
- ✓ **Flexibility** in risk
- ✓ **Security** in data handling
- ✓ **Clarity** in operations and contracts

When evaluating partners, the key question is not: “Do they have this capability?”

But rather: "How consistently and proactively do they operate it?”

Because the difference between a **good** and a **great** partner is not whether data or processes exist, it’s whether they are **actively used to manage performance in real time.**

How NPHUB Aligns

NPHub partners with universities to meet these evaluation standards in practice, not just in theory.

We work across clinical, operational, financial, and technical teams to provide:

- 👁️ **Real-time visibility** into placement performance
- 💸 **Structured workflows** that reduce administrative burden
- 📋 **Predictable cost models** that support institutional planning
- 🔒 **SOC 2 compliant systems** to ensure student data security
- 📄 **Clear, flexible agreements** that align with university requirements

Our goal is not to replace internal placement efforts, but to support them, helping universities build a more scalable, transparent, and reliable placement model as demand grows.