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**Practice Learning Partners’ Handbook**

**Academic Year: 2020/21**

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Introduction

This handbook is designed to provide information for all those involved in supporting learners in practice placement who are undertaking Nursing and Midwifery (NMC) approved programmes at Leeds Beckett University. This includes the following courses:

* BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing and BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing (Apprentice and Non-Apprentice routes)
* Apprentice Nursing Associate Foundation degree
* Post graduate diplomas in School Nursing, District Nursing or Health Visiting
* Non-Medical Prescribing Modules

The NMC (2018) Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment provide the framework for practice learning and are detailed within this Handbook. This handbook should therefore be of particular use to staff functioning in the following roles:

* **Nominated Person** (NP**)**
* **Practice Assessors** (PA**)**
* **Practice Supervisors** (PS)
* **Academic Assessors** (AA)

Learners are provided with a Programme Handbook, Module handbooks, Practice Assessment Documents (electronic or paper versions), Practice Support Handbook and they also have access to up-to-date online versions of general information that underpins their programme of study. Details of University student regulations are on the University website a*t:* [*https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/public-information/student-regulations/*](https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/public-information/student-regulations/)

Practice is a fundamental part of nursing programmes and enables learners to apply their knowledge in clinical settings and is an aspect of the course that learners always enjoy. Pre and post registration learners on NMC approved programmes undertake a range of placements across the Leeds health community and further afield across Yorkshire and Harrogate region. The University is grateful to the staff in all our partner organisations that support, facilitate and guide our learners on NMC approved programmes. It is not unusual for practice staff to have questions or queries about the programmes, learner learning needs or how to complete the practice assessment documents. The programme teams are here to support supervisors and assessors in practice, so please feel free to contact the university, either by telephone or by email (a full list of contact details is at the back of this handbook.

# The 2018 Nursing Midwifery Council (NMC) Education Standards

We have adopted a collaborative approach to meeting the updated NMC Education Standards and have been working closely with our partners within Leeds and the wider clinical practice placement circuit to ensure that all our NMC validated courses meet the needs of service users, learners and employers. In particular, there has been strong local collaboration on the transition to the new Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment (SSSA, NMC 2018) which replace the Mentor, Sign off Mentor and Practice Teacher role with the roles of Practice Supervisor (PS) Practice Assessor (PA) and Academic Assessor (AA.)

All NMC standards are available at [www.nmc.org.uk/standards/](http://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/):

**Pre-registration Nursing:**



**Nursing Associate:**

 ****

**Prescribing:**



**Specialist Community Public Health Nurses and Community Specialist Practitioner (Nb. These standards are currently under review):**



**Education Standards applying to all NMC approved programmes:**

# https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/images/education-standards-images/standards-framework.jpg?h=150&w=220&scale=both&mode=crop

# Main changes to Mentor and Practice Teacher roles

* NMC (2008) SLAiP standards will cease to apply after a period of transition
* NMC (2018) SSSA standards will apply to all first year learners and learners who commenced their second year after September 2020 on NMC approved programmes – pre and post registration from September 2020.
* From September 2020, the terms ‘Mentor’ and ‘Practice Teacher’ will be phased out
* The traditional roles of a Mentor and Practice Teacher will be replaced with a range of new roles - Practice Supervisor (PS), Practice Assessor (PA), Nominated Person (NP) and Academic Assessor (AA)
* There will be appropriate training and preparation introduced for the new roles

In addition:

* + The sign-off Mentor role will also cease.
  + Practice learning and support of learners will be the responsibility of every NMC registrant, as stipulated in the NMC Code (2018)
  + The 40% Mentor/ Practice Teacher learner contact requirements will be removed from all programmes
  + Triennial review will no longer be a requirement, to be replaced with a reflection on support/assessing learners as part of the 3 yearly NMC re-validation processes
  + Other registered professionals (non-nurses / midwives) with appropriate skills and knowledge can participate in the supervision of learners
  + For Non-medical prescribing programmes only, the PA can be any registered health professional who is an experienced prescriber with suitable equivalent qualifications

# The Key Roles for Supervising and Assessing Learners

*(italics indicate wording directly taken from NMC 2018 Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment)*

1. **Practice Supervisor (PS)**

Any registered health professional after preparation can supervise learners, act as a role model and provide feedback to support them ***“..to meet their proficiencies and programme outcomes.”*** They will contribute to the learner’ practice assessment documents by “.. ***periodically recording relevant observations on the conduct, proficiency and achievement of the students they are supervising****”* and **“*contribute to student assessments”*** and “***engage with Practice Assessors***”. There may be one or more PS for each learner per placement. Different models of supervision will be in place in different placement areas.

1. **Practice Assessor (PA)**

Learners must have a named Practice Assessor for a practice placement or series of placements. Practice Assessors conduct assessments to confirm achievement of proficiencies and progression, informed by feedback from PSs. They ***“..make and record objective evidence-based assessments………. drawing on student records, direct observations, and student self – reflection and other resources.***” The Practice Assessor “..***periodically observe[s] the student across environments in order to inform decisions..”***

The PA must be a NMC registered nurse/midwife for student nurses/midwives or a registered nursing associate for trainee nursing associates. The PA does not have to be same field as the student, if they have appropriate equivalent experience for field – however for Leeds Beckett University community nursing programmes, there is an expectation that District Nursing students are supervised by a PA who is a Community Specialist Practitioner who is a District Nurse, and for Health Visitor and School Nurse students, their PA will be a SCPHN who is either a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse who is either a Health Visitor OR a School Nurse. Initially, they will be mainly existing experienced Mentors or Practice Teachers who have undertaken some additional preparation.

All PAs will continue to be required to undertake an annual update. A record will be kept on the employer’s Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system or equivalent.

n.b. for Non-medical prescribing programmes, the PA can be any registered health professional who is an experienced prescriber with suitable equivalent qualifications. The PS and PA for a non-medical prescribing learner can be the same person only in exceptional circumstances.

***N. B. A PA CANNOT ACT AS PS AND PA FOR THE SAME LEARNER ON A PLACEMENT***

In the transition period in Leeds, current up dated mentors/sign off mentors will become the first wave of PAs with preparation. The current SLIP programme at Leeds University and Leeds Beckett University prepares staff for both Mentor and Practice Assessor roles. Eventually the NMC approved SLIP mentorship programme will be replaced with a PA preparation programme as NMC require PAs to “***undertake preparation or evidence prior learning and experience“***  to demonstrate specific PA competencies.

1. **Academic Assessor (AA**)

Each learner will have an Academic Assessor allocated to them for each part (for pre-registration learners this will be for a full academic year) of the programme then change for the next part. The AA will be a University lecturer who works “….. ***in partnership with Practice Assessor to evaluate and recommend student for progression for each part of the programme..”.***  The AA collates and confirms information on a learner’s achievements in practice and academic work.

1. **Nominated Person (NP)**

There must be a nominated person for each practice setting to actively support learners and address learner concerns. Learners will be made aware of the support and opportunities available to them within all learning environments and this will be recorded in their practice assessment documents. The person who undertakes this role will vary in different organisations, but might include the Education Lead or a Practice Learning Facilitator

More detailed guidance on roles and responsibilities in practice is provided on page 17 of this Handbook.

# Transition to the new SSSA standards – timeline

Universities and placement providers across England will have different timescales for introducing the new standards, so across Yorkshire, there will be a period of transition as we introduce the new standards gradually.

At Leeds Beckett University, from September 2020, the new SSSA will apply to:

* Leeds Beckett Year 1 adult and mental health pre-registration nursing students, nursing degree apprentices and year 1 trainee nursing associates
* Leeds Beckett Year 2 adult and mental health pre- registration nursing students who commence Year 2 from September 2020 onwards
* Leeds Beckett students on Non-Medical prescribing programmes
* Leeds Beckett students on Specialist Community Public Health programmes (Health Visiting, School Nursing) and Community Specialist Practice Programmes (District Nursing)

Leeds Beckett Year 3 adult and mental health pre-registration nursing students and nursing degree apprentices AND year 2 pre-registration adult and mental health nursing students, nursing degree apprentices and trainee nursing associates who are part way through their second year will continue on the 2008 standards so will still require Mentors and where appropriate, Sign off Mentors.

# Planning for a Learner on Placement

Pre-registration learners are be assigned to placement areas and will receive information about the placement via the Practice Placement Unit at Leeds University (<https://practiceplacements.leeds.ac.uk/nursing-and-midwifery/practice-placement-unit/>) in partnership with the Leeds Beckett University Placement Unit (<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/studenthub/placement-information/health-and-social-care-practice-learning-team/nursing/>)

Post-registration learners are assigned to a placement area or areas by their employer and this is recorded by the Practice Placement Team at Leeds Beckett.

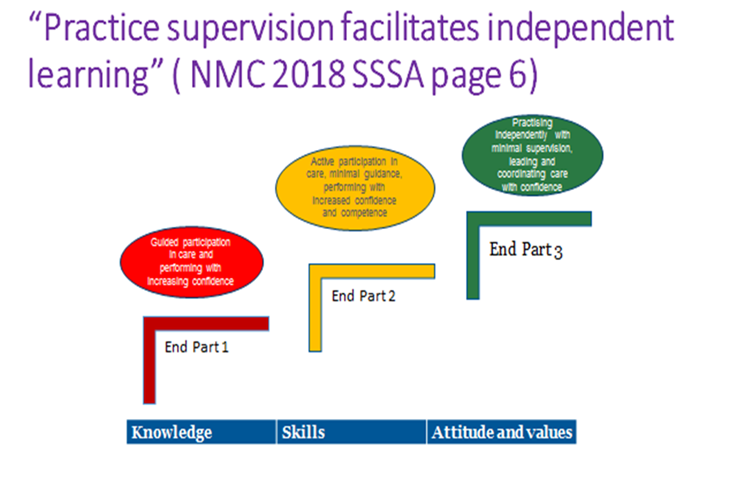
The SPARC placement system is utilised to support allocations and placement areas are informed of allocated pre-registration learners usually 6 weeks prior for initial checking and once confirmed, they are released to learners 4 weeks prior to the start of the placement. This information will include practice hours for the placement and type of placements.

Pre-placement preparation by the NP, PA, PS and AA is important to highlight areas of potential learning and good practice for the learner. It also will help to ensure that the whole team are ready and equipped to provide good levels of support and understand the learning model of the programme. Below are suggested areas to consider:

* Ensure that there is a ‘Welcome Pack’ ready and that it is up to date
* Be mindful that for some learners this will be the first time they have been in practice or in that speciality, so they may be anxious or concerned about what they will see and have to deal with during placement
* Some learners will already be on a professional register and may be very experienced so will have specific learning needs for their programme of study
* Review areas of expertise across PAs, PSs and colleagues and take note of the skills / role of other members of the multi-disciplinary team that the learners could access during the placement

Protected learning time

All learners will be either supernumerary or require some protected learning time (depending on the programme) whilst undertaking placement experiences. However, learners should be participating in direct patient care appropriate to their level and the outcomes of their programme. As they progress through the programme there is an expectation that learners will move from observation and direct supervision to minimal supervision, and finally independent practice (indirect supervision) at the point of registration or programme completion. For example, at each stage for pre-registration learners the expectations of supervision will be different:



Whilst with a PS or PA for the placement, the learner must be undertaking experiences which meet the appropriate NMC Standards of Proficiency/Competencies. They will need to have a range of different placement experiences and these will be organised through the Practice Placement Team. Many programmes use a Hub and Spoke model. This means that they are based in one primary placement area for most of their time (the Hub or Base placement) but also have Spoke/Alternative short placement experiences where the learner can be supervised to gain a breadth of alternative experiences to enhance their learning. The learner’s PA will usually be based in the Hub placement.

Practice Learning

The practice placement structure is dependent on the programme the learner is studying and provides a robust framework to support the learner’s development. This may utilise either a “block” learning model or weekly study days depending on the programme. It will be made clear to learners at the beginning of each stage of the programme, what constitutes NMC placement hours and the number of placement hours required by NMC.

All learners will have a practice assessment document with standards and skills they need to achieve clearly identified by each stage, under supervision of the PS and/or PA. The pre-registration nursing students (apprentice or traditional routes) will use the Midlands, Yorkshire and East (MYE) Practice Assessment Document (PAD) which is delivered electronically and incorporates the Ongoing Achievement Record (OAR). The Nursing Associate programme will use the England Nursing Associate PAD (NA PAD). Post registration programmes document their progress and achievements in Pebblepad – an electronic document.

# Reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010

Where reasonable adjustments are anticipated or detailed in a plan, these adjustments must be provided in the placement environment. In the spirit of learner empowerment, learners are encouraged to share details of reasonable adjustments with their PA to enable support strategies to be put in place. The learner may decide that the University will undertake the notification on a need to know basis.

# Independent learning

Independent learning is an integral part of all NMC programmes within the context of feedback and seeking support. Learners are signposted to staff members and services offering support to develop their independent and proactive learning skills. Practice assessment documents on all programmes include templates that learners can use to reflect on their learning needs and to prepare for academic and practice support which are core concepts in developing independent learning. There is an expectation that learners will use the available resources to achieve an optimal learning experience.

# Administration of Medicines and Pre-registration learners

## Activities that pre-registration learners must not undertake: Independent administration of medicines

## Learners – both student nurses and trainee nursing associates should take every opportunity in their clinical placements to gain experience in administration of medicines under direct supervision. This means that whilst on a placement they **must** be supervised by a Registered Nurse (or Midwife) in the administration of medicines via oral, topical, subcutaneous, inhalation and per rectum routes.

## They can also be involved, under direct supervision, in the administration of intramuscular and for controlled medication, as an additional (third) signatory, to those required by two registered practitioners.

## Student nurses on 2018 NMC pre-registration programmes can also be involved, under direct supervision, in the administration of intravenous medication. Trainee nursing associates are not permitted to be involved in the administration of intravenous medication.

Student nurses and trainee nursing associates must NOT be involved in the administration or supply of medicines under a Patient Group Direction (PGD) as legislation does not legally permit this.

The professional responsibility for the administration of medicines rests with the Registered Nurse (or Midwife). Additional guidance is available at:

* HEE (2018)Advisory Guidance Administration of Medicines by Nursing Associates <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Advisory%20guidance%20-%20administration%20of%20medicines%20by%20nursing%20associates.pdf>
* RPS (2018) Professional guidance on the safe and secure handling of medicines

<https://www.rpharms.com/recognition/setting-professional-standards/safe-and-secure-handling-of-medicines/professional-guidance-on-the-safe-and-secure-handling-of-medicines>

# Practice Hours

Learners will be required to work a range of hours depending on service provision. This may include a range of shift patterns over a 7 day week period. This is to ensure that they experience the range of hours expected of registered healthcare staff. Learners should undertake a range of shifts from the outset of their programme.

Placement areas need to be aware of EU working time directives <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/workingtimedirective.htm> that require an 11-hour clear break between shifts, from the end of one shift to the start of the next shift or attending University, excluding travel time.ie if the learner finishes work at 8.00 pm on Monday they should not start work until 7.00 am on Tuesday.

When the Practice Placement Team sends out learner information to placement areas, they identify how many days a learner is required to work in the placement. This is based on the norm of one day = 7.5 hours i.e. an 8 hour shift which includes a half hour break or one day = 8 hours for apprentices. Nurse apprentices, on their primary (Hub) placement, should follow the shift patterns agreed by their employer.

Sometimes, staff may schedule learners to work fewer hours than this for practical reasons, i.e. clinics finishing early. They must however, ensure that they undertake the scheduled practice hours for each placement to avoid having hours to make up at the end of the programme in order to comply with NMC requirements.

Placement areas need to ensure that at the start of all placements PA and PSs review and co-ordinate shifts with the learner in advance to ensure learners are appropriately supported and supervised.

**Leeds Beckett pre-registration learners’ guidance on shift patterns:**

Weekend and Night shift:

Learners must work a range of early, late and weekend shifts (usually no more than one weekend in three and no less than one full weekend each stage) during placement experiences. This must also include night duty in stage two and three.

Normally nights would not be undertaken within stage one. Learners sign a “Fitness to work nights” form at the beginning of the year - if there are changes to health, then an assessment by Occupational Health Department may be needed.

Long days:

At times during the programme, placements may require learners to do “long shifts.” In this instance, learners must discuss this with their AA/Practice Support Lecturer before the placement commences. If the learner is happy to work long days and there are no health risks, this will usually be approved. However, there may be occasions where it is in the learner’s best interests, either for health reasons or development opportunities, that they work a regular shift pattern.

Banks holidays:

Learners are expected to work Bank Holidays if this is a scheduled practice day on their allocated placement and if the placement area requires this. If the practice area is closed for the bank holiday and this is a scheduled placement day, the learner will be required to make up the hours during that placement or at the end of the programme. The learner may wish to discuss with their PA/PS either working the bank holiday on another placement area or working longer shifts to make up the hours.

Day off requests:

If learners require a certain day off from practice for personal reasons, for example because of religious celebrations they wish to attend or because of medical appointments, these should be discussed with their PA or PS giving plenty of notice where possible. These should be requested as “days off” and the learner will still need to work their allocated hours that week.

Sickness or Absence from placement:

Failure to attend placement without good reasons, is viewed as a professional conduct concern and may be referred for fitness to practise review involving the University and, if an apprentice, the employer.

Learners are required to behave responsibly and professionally at all times. This includes reporting any sickness or absence from placement following the correct procedures. If a learner cannot undertake an allocated shift due to sickness, then they must phone the practice area before the start of the shift and ask to speak to the person in charge making a note of their name and position in their practice documents. They should inform them of their sickness and let them know when they intend to return or if not known, tell the person in charge when they next intend to telephone them to update them. If unable to contact the placement, the learner must contact the Placement Unit at Leeds Beckett University. They must also report the absence to the University by emailing [nursing@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:nursing@leedsbeckett.ac.uk) before the start of their allocated shift.

Any sickness must be recorded clearly in the practice placement documents, with the number of hours they were sick and this then needs to be signed by staff in practice.

Sickness during a shift:

If a learner needs to leave placement because of illness, they must discuss this with the person in charge and document on their time sheet, the number of hours worked and time left practice. They should also email the absence line: [nursing@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:nursing@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Attendance during adverse weather conditions:

Whilst personal safety is a priority when travelling in bad weather, learners are expected to make every effort to attend placement and should not assume that early morning travel disruptions will prevail throughout the day, as difficulties with travel routes and public transport are likely to improve as the day progresses. Learners should, therefore, make continued efforts to attend placement and ensure that they communicate any challenges with their PA/PS or placement manager. If unable to attend placement due to adverse weather conditions, the learner should follow the usual reporting arrangements for absences and making up practice hours.

Nurse apprentices must ensure they also follow the reporting procedures set by their employers.

Making Hours up:

If a learner is sick or absent from placement, then there is a possibility that they will not have experienced the hours required for the stage of the course. Failure to meet the required number of hours may mean they are unable to progress at Exam Board. Usually a maximum of 30 hours can be taken forward to the following year.

Approval may be given for a learner to make hours up in an allocated placement area with agreement of the placement area AND the approval of their AA/ Practice Support Tutor. The PA must complete the relevant table in the learner’s Practice Assessment Documents if they agree. For apprentice nurses, this must be agreed and signed by their employer.

# Attendance Monitoring

Learners on all programmes **are expected to attend taught and practice element of NMC programmes.** Attendance is monitored in the University and within clinical practice areas. Failure to attend sufficient taught or practice components could result in the learner not being able to submit an assessment for a module or have sufficient practice hours which could have consequences on the ability of the learner to progress and/or register. If, for untoward reasons, the learner misses taught sessions, they may be expected to provide evidence that they have achieved the learning outcomes for the missed session.

In some cases, learners will be apprentices or employees of an organisation. In such cases their attendance will be managed in line with employer policies, therefore they will be subject to the employer’s Attendance Management Policy, in addition to the University’s Policy. There will be clear communication between the employer and the University regarding absence, and this relates to both practice and University taught sessions.

It is important that attendance in practice is monitored to ensure that the required practice hours set by the NMC are completed. Attendance will be recorded on the attendance record in the Practice Assessment Documents for all placements. Practice staff are advised to keep a record of attendance in order to verify the record the learner has in the relevant Practice Assessment Document*.* The total amount of hours required for each placement is clearly identified on SPARC and the learner’s relevant practice assessment documents.

Cumulative absences from practice will need to be discussed with the programme lead and in the case of apprentices will also include the employer.

# Annual Leave

Annual leave arrangements are clearly identified within the different programme plans and detailed in the learner’s programme handbooks so learners will be aware from the start of the programmes.

For apprenticeship programmes holidays cannot be taken during a summative assessed or taught part of the programme. The total number of holiday entitlement is dictated by their employment contract and holidays will be taken with the agreement of the line manager and programme lead.

# The SSSA roles in Practice

# Practice Assessor (PA)

The Practice Assessors is responsible for ensuring that the placement is able to facilitate the learning objectives set for the experience and that the learner practices within the limits of competence with appropriate supervision. The role is essential in supporting and enabling learners to learn the practice skills, proficiencies, professional behaviours and evidence-based knowledge to become competent, safe and effective practitioners.

The PA in the placement area will be responsible for overseeing the placement experience. It is the responsibility of the organisation providing the placement to ensure that all health and safety checks have been completed. It is the learner’s responsibility to ensure compliance with the policies, procedures and codes of the organisation they are placed with, including health and safety.

The PA will be responsible for the learner’s assessment in practice and will liaise with colleagues, PS(s) and AA. In the case of apprentices this includes the line manager.

The role of the PA will include the following:

* orientate the learner to the placement area on their first day (or ensure this occurs)
* identify and provide access to appropriate learning opportunities and resources
* guide the learner to reﬂect on experiences to facilitate learning in and from practice
* complete all aspects of the relevant practice assessment document, speciﬁcally for the completion of the initial (may be in partnership with a PS who undertakes this), formative mid-point and summative final meetings/interviews and assessments of practice
* complete the appropriate sections of the practice assessment documentation
* undertake the appropriate assessment in an agreed timeframe during and at the end of a placement within the scope of their practice – for pre-registration learners, this will include formative and summative Episode of Care assessments as outlined in the practice assessment documents
* ensure that both the learner and the specified AA are made aware of any concerns or issues immediately. In the case of apprentices or other employees this would include their Line Manager
* utilise personal development plans to enhance learning in identified area
* discuss the learner’s personal or developmental issues with appropriate members of staﬀ when necessary
* demonstrate conduct of a professional standard at all times

# Practice Supervisor (PS)

The Practice Supervisor is responsible for the learner’s supervision in practice and will contribute to the assessment of the learner through discussion with the PA and liaise with colleagues, the AA and possibly the NP. In the case of apprentices this will also include the line manager. The role of the PS will include the following:

* Support practice supervision
* Provide supervision in a way that reflects the learner’s development needs and stage of learning
* Ensure safe and effective learning experiences
* Support learning in line with their scope of practice to enable to learner to meet their proficiencies and programme outcomes
* Provide feedback on progress towards, and achievement of, proficiencies and skills
* Contribute to the learner’s records of achievement and assessment to inform PA and AA decisions for progression
* Raise and respond to learner conduct and competence concerns
* May undertake initial interview and professional values mid placement with the agreement and oversight of the Practice Assessor. They contribute to but do NOT undertaken the midpoint and final interviews of the placement.

# Academic Assessor (AA)

# The Academic Assessor will be identified in the learner’s practice assessment documents and will be a key contact point for the PA or PS if there are any cause for concerns regarding a learner’s progress or professional behaviours. The role of the AA will include the following:

* Collate and confirm learner achievement of proficiencies and programme outcomes for each part of the programme to inform learner progression decisions
* Document decisions on conduct, proficiency and achievement
* Work in partnership with learner’s Practice Assessors
* Ensures that communication and collaboration with Practice Assessors is scheduled for relevant points in programme

Nominated Person (NP)

The Nominated Person for each practice setting is there to actively support learners and address learner concerns. The contact details should be included in the learner’s practice assessment documents. It is up to the placement organisations to identify who undertakes this role.

The NP should be made aware if there are any causes for concern involving learners.

# Overview of PS, PA, AA & NP Roles and Responsibilities

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Practice Supervisor (PS)** | **Practice Assessor (PA)** | **Academic Assessor**  **(AA)** |
| Induction to placement | **√ or** | **√ or** |  |
| Arrival in placement | **√ or** | **√** |  |
| Induction to practice checklist | **√ or** | **√** |  |
| Initial Interview | **√ and** | **√** |  |
| Additional notes | **√** | **√** | **√** |
| Action plans to meet standards/skills exploring IPL opportunities | **√** | **√** | **√** |
| Service user feedback | **√ or** | **√** |  |
| Learning outcomes |  | **√** |  |
| Midpoint Interview |  | **√** |  |
| * Action Plans |  | **√** | **√** |
| Final Interview |  | **√** | **√** |
| * Action Plans |  | **√** | **√** |
| Programme specific assessments (e.g. Episode of care) |  | **√** | **√ (where necessary)** |
| Evidence contributions to assessment | **√** | **√** | **√** |
| Standards and Skills |  | **√** |  |
| End of placement/progression points |  | **√** | **√** |
| Learner Feedback | **√** | **√** | **√** |

Interview Guidance

Initial Interview Guidance

Undertaken by the PA and/or the PS within the ﬁrst week of placement to set a plan of action to meet practice elements and skills.

***Tips for initial interview:***

* Ask the learner to assess themselves in terms of knowledge, skills and professional behaviours; what are their strengths and areas they feel they need to develop.
* Review the learner's practice assessment documents to highlight the skills which are achievable during the placement, to help identify suitable learning opportunities and learning resources.
* Ensure that the learner is made aware of who will be responsible for overseeing and supporting them in practice – especially if the PA or nominated PS(s) are absent due to leave or night duty.
* Set a date for formative mid-point interview. Record this at the end of the preliminary interview sheet.

Midpoint Interview

Undertaken by the PA halfway through the placement in order to review the action plan and the learner’s development to ensure the learner is on track to meet their goals and pass their assessment(s). It is an opportunity to review the learner’s competence and progress through the ﬁrst half of the placement. An action plan should be implemented to maximise on opportunities for learning, in situations where elements and skills are not being met.

***Tips for the Midpoint Interview***

* Ask the learner to self-assess their progress so far
* Ask colleagues for feedback on the learner, ask them to identify the learner’s strengths and areas to develop
* Review the initial learning outcomes. How much have these been achieved? What new opportunities are now available?
* As the PA should be engaging in continuous assessment with the learner, the formative interview should be predominantly about discussing progress to date and future learning goals
* Set some new learning outcomes (if appropriate) for the second half of the placement
* Agree dates for the assessment programme specific assessment e.g. Episode of Care and Medicine Management

Final Summative Interview

Undertaken by the PA within the last week of the placement) **to ensure all assessment criteria have been met** and to reflect on the learner’s placement.

***Tips for the Final (Summative Interview)***

* Ask the learner to self-assess their progress during the whole placement
* Get them to identify areas they wish to enhance during their next placement
* Ask colleagues for feedback on the learner, ask them to identify the learner’s strengths and areas to develop
* Highlight learner strengths and skills that they need to continue to develop
* The more detailed the feedback you provide in all interviews the better. Documented comments are a record of assessment decisions and provide a written rationale for a pass or refer in practice. Comments are essential for the AA to decide whether the learner is ﬁt to progress to registration
* Please be speciﬁc. **DO NOT** just write 'to continue…’ this is non-descript and adds no real value

# Developmental Action Plans

Action plans are a way of identifying key areas that learners need to develop within an element (or elements) of practice. It should not be viewed as a 'notification of failure’ but as a tool for learners and PAs to enable them to focus on specific areas of development and agree and identify methods to achieve the required level of proficiency. Action plans should utilise SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time- bound).

PAs must inform the AA of the need for an action plan and for assistance in formulation. This must be implemented at the earliest opportunity (**midpoint interview at the very latest**).

An action plan must always be implemented when a learner is assessed as underachieving in any area of an element of practice (knowledge underpinning practice; clinical skills; professional behaviour, attitude, and values).

The action plan should clearly identify the area, or areas for the learner to develop with regards to knowledge, practical skills and personal or professional abilities. In addition:

* Options to achieve the learner’s goals for each area of development should be discussed and agreed with the learner and written in the Action Plan.
* Evidence the learner is required to demonstrate competence must be agreed and documented.
* Actions to be undertaken by the learner and PA to support the achievement of the action plan must be documented and agreed.
* A realistic time scale should be agreed, and the action should be reviewed as agreed and the learner assessed.

The PA and learner must agree periodic reviews of learner progress and these discussions must be recorded in the 'Additional meeting’ sheets in the relevant practice assessment documents

Detailed information on pre-registration Practice Assessment Documents and Ongoing Achievement Record and can be accessed via the Practice Placement website: <https://practiceplacements.leeds.ac.uk/>

# Learner’s Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities listed below are only an indicative summary of the key areas to be achieved during practice placements.

* The learner must attend their designated placement location in the agreed time frame
* The learner should link with their PA on the first day of their placement – face to face or other means
* The learner must review their practice assessment documents to ensure all learning experiences and shift attendance are recorded contemporaneously
* The learner must make contact with their PA at agreed points to record assessment, review and feedback
* The learner must ensure that the placement information, signature and record of attendance are completed for each practice placement area
* The learner must ensure that the required meetings (interviews) and assessments are undertaken with the PA
* The learner should be reflective and positive towards feedback they receive
* The learner must inform their AA, in the case of apprentices the Line Manager and Programme Lead if an Action Plan has been implemented
* The learner must maintain patient confidentiality at all times in line with current guidance.
* Conduct must be of a professional standard at all times

Learners should make contact with the placement area 2 weeks before the start of placement to introduce themselves to the placement area and think about setting their preliminary learning goals/objectives for the experience.

# Service User Involvement

The NMC requires Service User/Carer (SUC) feedback on the abilities and competencies of learners in practice, to help inform the summative assessment of the learner’s practise. To facilitate this, learners need to obtain SUC feedback. The PA or PS is required to oversee this process so that any approach to SUCs is sensitively and appropriately made. The PS/PA can decide that SUC feedback would be best obtained by themselves and reported as such in the learner’s practice assessment documents.

Under no account must the SUC be identiﬁed to the learner in their documentation. Staff should consider selection of appropriate service users that the learner has provided care to on a consistent basis; be aware of biases when selecting service users; consider the vulnerability of service users who may be concerned about providing feedback about a learner; ensure that the purpose of their feedback and how this will be used to inform their decision about learner performance and competence has been discussed.

# Escalating Concerns

## Matters related to perceived unsafe or dangerous practice (all learners)

* There may be occasions when there are concerns that the practice of a learner is perceived to be unsafe or dangerous practice. It is important that this is brought to the attention of a senior member of the team within BOTH the practice area - e.g. Nominated Person or the Programme Lead, Academic Assessor/Personal Tutor or Link Lecturer as soon as possible.

## Conduct/capability issues regarding an apprentice

* Any conduct or capability issues for apprentices/ employees will be undertaken in conjunction with the employer. Any conduct issues will need to be discussed with the University if they impact on their fitness to practice. If the University identify any fitness to practice concerns these will be communicated to the Line Manager.

## Learners Raising Concerns

* If any learners have any concerns about anything they have witnessed in practice, the University recommends that they raise this first with their PA (and line manager for apprentices) or the placement Nominated Person. The learner will also be advised to inform their Practice Support Tutor / Academic Assessor.
* Learners are also informed that if they feel their concern has not been recognized or appropriately acted upon, they have the right to escalate this concern to the appropriate staﬀ.
* Learner concerns should be addressed through the appropriate policies for the individual clinical area and the academic staﬀ should be included in all steps of the process. The role of academic staﬀ is to support the learner in raising concerns, escalating if required, and supporting them in the process of any outcome (such as investigation or provision of statements).
* In some instances, concerns may be escalated from the clinical areas to the appropriate professional bodies and clinical staff and the learner may be required to support this process.
* Learners will be supported by the academic staﬀ and the University expects that that if a learner raises a concern, that they do not submit any form of statement, either written or verbal, without the presence of an appropriate member of academic staﬀ.
* Appendix 1 and 2 contains flowcharts and guidance outlining the University **Raising Concerns policy** which provides guidance for learners and staff on raising concerns related to practice issues as well as your employer’s policy on raising concerns.

## Tripartite Meetings for Nursing Apprentices

Twice yearly progress reviews are held between nursing apprentices, employers and the University to ensure learners progress and achieve in a timely fashion. A record of tripartite meetings will be kept. These are within the Practice Assessment Documents. All identified issues will be closely monitored through tripartite meetings and action planning put in place as appropriate.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**How do I become a Practice Supervisor (PS)?**

All nurses and midwives should be capable of acting as practice supervisors, as set out in the NMC Code.

While a practice supervisor will need to be ‘prepared’ before supervising learners, this does not mean they must undergo a formal preparatory programme. Information and materials will be available via an organisation’s intranet, the Practice Learning Facilitators, the healthcare placements website and from colleagues who have undertaken training to become a Practice Assessor. A process of self-declaration is being introduced.

Learners completing the pre-registration nursing programmes from 2023 onwards will already be prepared as supervisors.

**How do I become a Practice Assessor (PA)?**

If you are already on the locally held mentor register as an active, up to date mentor or practice teacher, you will need to do some additional PA preparation outlining the changes and there will be several modes of delivery to achieve this. The most common way will be via the current mentor update processes

If you are have not undertaken any form of mentor or practice teacher preparation previously and have completed preceptorship following initial registration as a nurse or midwife with the NMC, you will need to undertake a Practice Assessor Preparation programme. This programme is currently being developed to replace the current SLIP Mentor programme

**Do I still need to be a sign-off mentor?**

Yes, because some learners will be in the process of completing programmes which began before the new standards. These students will require sign-off mentors whilst the programmes transition to the new standards. This is likely to be until 2023. Sign off mentors are no longer required under the NMC (2018) SSSA standards.

**Can Registered Nursing Associates be Practice Supervisors?**

Yes. A registered Nursing Associate may supervise trainee nursing associates and student nurses on placement in part 1. I.e. year 1 student nurses or trainee nursing associates

**Can Registered Nursing Associates be Practice Assessors?**

Yes, but only for trainee nursing associates, and only after they have undertaken a Practice Assessor Programme.

# Placement Evaluation

It is important that placements are of the highest possible quality and therefore we have strong quality control mechanisms in place, such as educational placement audit and having a link lecturer for each area.

Learners have the opportunity to evaluate their placements online. It is essential that learners use this opportunity to have their say as well as helping us to maintain and improve the quality of placements as much as possible.

Placements are evaluated by learners at https://onlinepare.net and evaluations can be reviewed by clinical staff.

# Support for Practice Learning from the University

If you have any questions or need any help or support below are a list of useful points of contact who may be able to assist you.

**Leeds Beckett University Practice Placement Team:**

Leeds Beckett University Placement Unit <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/studenthub/placement-information/health-and-social-care-practice-learning-team/nursing/> Telephone: 0113 812 8985

**Leeds University Practice Placement Unit:**

<https://practiceplacements.leeds.ac.uk> Telephone: 0113 343 1375 or Email [placements@healthcare.leeds.ac.uk](mailto:placements@healthcare.leeds.ac.uk)

Leeds University PPU allocates Leeds Beckett and Leeds University pre-registration nursing learners via the SPARC system

Both of these websites contain lots of useful resources for Practice Assessors and Practice Supervisors.

**Leeds Becket University Course Directors:**

Course Director Pre-registration Nursing: Janine Lee

Director of Nursing Apprenticeships: Liz Clark

Course Director Post-registration Nursing: Paul Mackreth

For specific programme lead’s contact details, please contact Simon Madley, Pre -registration Course administrator [s.madley@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:s.madley@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**PARE** <https://onlinepare.net/> :

PARE (Placement Assessment Record and Evaluation) is the new system that will be used across the Yorkshire and Humber region to help manage and support healthcare learners whilst on placement. It will replace the existing system, PPQA also known as Health Care Placements website, which is becoming obsolete. Data from the old website is being migrated over to PARE.

This website enables online data on:

* Placement profiles
* Educational Audits
* Learner evaluations of placements
* Mentor/ Practice Assessor register

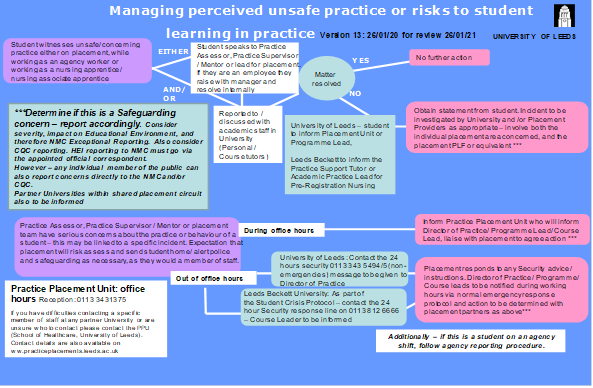
Although PARE has the facility to offer online practice assessment documents, Leeds Beckett University and the University of Leeds are not using this function and will continue to use Pebblepad or paper versions depending on the programme.

**Link or Liaison Lecturer:**

Each clinical placement area will have a named lecturer whose role is to maintain and develop education/practice links in order to facilitate an effective placement learning environment in collaboration with the practice placement provider. One of their key responsibilities is for ensuring the education audit is undertaken annually. They provide a point of advice and support for placement staff for any issues concerning learners on placement. Link lecturer details should be on the placement profile on the healthcare placement website and posters in the link area. Contact the PPU if unclear

Thank you for your support in helping to support, supervise and assess Leeds Beckett nursing learners!

**Appendix 1 Managing Perceived Unsafe Practice or Risks to Learning in Practice**



**Appendix 2 Community Specialist Practitioner and Specialist Community Public Health Nursing post–registration programmes only**

**Procedure when learners are identified as having difficulties in practice (diagrammatic representation of process at end of document)**

We recognise that learning in practice offers all learners and practice placements some challenges. Whilst there are often no issues that need action planning, all learners need the space and time to develop their practice and that sometimes this may not be on the most direct path. We therefore offer the information below as a guide for learners and their practice placements.

 Anticipated settling in process

Learners are often new to an area of practice; therefore, it is expected that they will take some time to settle into the new sphere of practice and spend the first few periods of practice observing the norms of teamwork, reflecting upon their observations and gradually starting to participate in practice activities before being allowed to undertake practice unsupervised.  During this period of time the Practice Assessor (PA) or Practice Supervisor (PS) (where appropriate) works with learners to ascertain learning needs and to formatively assess the learner’s knowledge, skills and attitude in meeting learning outcomes.

 Identification of learner difficulties

If learners are experiencing difficulties in practice these typically become evident to the practice placement quite early, i.e. between the first and second placement meetings.  It is crucial that if the PAs, in collaboration with PSs, objectively identity difficulties and address these with the learner, the Academic Assessor (AA) and, where relevant, the sponsor/placement provider.  It is more likely that difficulties can be resolved if they are identified in the early stages of the programme. Some helpful strategies to aid learners to resolve issues are; constructive feedback to identify learning needs and to action plan these through written learning contracts/ action plans, reflection upon practice with the PSs and highlighting strengths to overcome weaknesses (building learner self-esteem).

Detailed and specific identification of student difficulties in practice placements

It is important that the PA or PS who identifies a learner who is experiencing difficulties articulates these as specifically and objectively as possible. It is expected that this can be done through the use the learner’s NMC programme standards, competencies or capabilities. Typically, reasons for difficulties are:

* The learners progress is slower than expected/required to meet the learning outcomes and develop practice competencies within the timescale, i.e. the learner has a lot of learning needs and is making progress, but very slowly.
* The learner’s attitude is causing a significant barrier to their learning
* Communication skills are causing the learner difficulties in making progress
* The learner does not appear to be forming relationships within the learning environment that could support their development
* The learner is faced with significant external problems that are acting as a barrier to the student’s progress in practice

If one or more of the above are beginning to emerge, the PA is required to identify and record if the learner’s progress is becoming problematic and the strategies they are taking to address this are not working.  The PA needs to identify whether, based on the learner’s current rate of development/progress, they are at risk of not successfully meeting the required level of competence at the end of the placement. *If the learner is employed or sponsored by an organisation, they must also be informed of the practice assessor’s concerns at an appropriate stage using the agreed process.*

Initial tripartite process to resolve difficulties

Pas must have discussions regarding these progress related issues with the learner and have developed an action plan to ensure that the learner has every opportunity to learn, grow and address the assessor’s concerns. However, if the PA identifies the learner as at risk of not successfully completing the practice placement the process must be documented and communicated to:

* The learner, explicitly and in writing, for example, using the interim meeting schedule
* The AA who will inform the learner that the University team has been contacted regarding these concerns so that a tripartite meeting to support the learner’s progress can take place

n.b. Pas may feel the need to seek advice from the AA regarding their level of concern.

Where the learner is sponsored and/or there is a placement provider who is not the practice assessor’s employer the relevant Education Lead (e.g. Nominated Person) will be informed by the AA that a concern has been raised, a meeting has taken place and a copy of the meeting notes will be provided (if appropriate).  The action plan/meeting notes should include this as an automatic course of action. A decision should be made whether the Education Lead/Manager is then included in all or part of the review meeting that will take place.

Review of the tripartite process

At the review meeting the agreed actions will be reviewed to ascertain whether they have been met.  If the learner’s needs are now being met at a satisfactory rate a second review meeting or telephone contact between PA and AA should take place a month later to ensure satisfactory progress is continuing and the Education lead/manager informed of the outcome.

Learner identified as at significant risk of failing the practice placement

If the learner continues to cause significant concern the following should be considered:

* If the agreed action has taken place but not resulted in the learner starting to make satisfactory progress the learner is now likely to be at risk of failing the practice element.  If this is the case this must be identified formally.
* If the agreed action did not take place as a direct consequence of the learner’s difficulties in practice the learner is likely to be at risk of failing the practice element.  If this is the case this must be identified formally.
* If the agreed action did not take place due to lack of placement opportunity a decision needs to be taken whether the placement can realistically provide these opportunities in the immediate future.

Having completed this rigorous and objective process, if the learner is still identified by the PA, placement provider and the AA as being likely to fail the practice element, then they will be advised of this and a tripartite discussion will consider the following options:

* If the option of a ‘contained award’ could be considered by the Examination Board to give credit to the work done to date
* Options of transferring any module credits to another course
* Permanent withdrawal from the course
* Continuing with the placement (providing there are no issues of public safety) in the expectation of failing

If the learner successfully appeals against this process, the University will with work with an employer/sponsor to seek a suitable alternative placement within the original employing/sponsoring organisation or in another appropriate organisation. However, the University has no power to provide placements and therefore, if attempts to find another placement are unsuccessful this will necessitate the termination of the programme.  If attempts are successful the new PA must be experienced, they will be informed that the student’s first placement was discontinued, and the module was deemed to have been failed.  The specific learning needs that resulted in the cause for concern within the first placement will be summarised and provided to the new practice assessor and form the basis of the new placements learning agreement.

(diagrammatic representation of process on next page)

