

Pre-Registration Nursing Education

**BSc (Hons) Nursing**

**ADULT & MENTAL HEALTH FIELDS**

**PRACTICE LEARNING**

**HANDBOOK**





**FACULTY OF LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
SCHOOL OF NURSING**

**PRE-REGISTRATION NURSING EDUCATION**

**BSc (Hons) Nursing**

**Adult and Mental Health Fields**

**PRACTICE LEARNING HANDBOOK**

**For Students, Mentors and Link Lecturers**

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## IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

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**A telephone answering service and email contact are available 24 hours daily, seven days weekly for contact outside of these hours.**

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the practice component of the BSc (Hons) Nursing programme. This handbook is intended to provide students, mentors/practice teachers and link lecturers with the core information around the practice learning component of the programme. In addition, it focuses on setting the context for practice learning and how the practice learning portfolio should be used to facilitate learning and development. For this programme, this begins with having an understanding of providing care within the context of Person-Centred Nursing as described by McCormack and McCance (2006, 2010).

**Throughout this handbook reference is made to the Portfolio for Learning. For clarity, when a portfolio is referred to, this is also the Ongoing Achievement Record.**

Developing a portfolio of learning may not be new to some students. However, for many students it will be a new experience, and the way in which they need to develop the portfolio for this programme likely to be new to all students. This can appear daunting and overwhelming in the beginning. Indeed, the portfolio for this programme will also be new to many mentors. This handbook intends to provide all the supporting information for student, mentors and link lecturers in order that the structure, context and process of developing the portfolio, including supporting students in this process, is clear. The portfolio is key in this process and it is important that students have the direction, guidance and skills necessary to make it successful.

### What is a portfolio?

A portfolio is a collection of evidence that illustrates a student's journey in achieving a set of outcomes through practice learning experiences. **The practice outcomes for each year of the programme are presented at the back of each portfolio.** The portfolio should be viewed as a learning resource that enables students and those supporting their learning to determine student's learning needs and to verify current, recent and retrospective learning experiences and activities. This enables mentors to undertake assessments that verify that evidence of learning exists that are consistent with learning objectives (Coffey 2005).

A portfolio can include a variety of sources of evidence that demonstrate learning. It can be big or small, thick or thin. It is not judged in terms of volume but in terms of its relevance and quality. Through the portfolio students are being asked to demonstrate that they possess the knowledge and skills they claim. However, the portfolio offers students the opportunity to do so in a creative way that is unique to them.

It is crucial that students, mentors/practice teachers and link lecturers familiarise themselves with the content of this handbook prior to supporting a student on practice learning. Framing learning within the context of Person-Centred Nursing is fundamental to the development of learning contracts with students, providing constructive feedback, and shaping the delivery of nursing care.

### Principles for Data Protection, Consent and Authenticity in Developing Evidence for Practice Learning Portfolios

#### ***Data protection and consent to use service user information for education purposes***

While the use and sharing of service user information is an essential part of providing direct health and social care, all professionals involved have a legal duty to keep all personal information confidential, sharing only what is necessary to provide appropriate care. The right of service users to privacy and the professional's duty of confidentiality apply regardless of the form in which the information is stored or communicated – this can be electronic, on paper, spoken word, photographic or biological.

There may be times when you are using your experiences of care-giving to demonstrate your reflections, complete worksheets or evidence your abilities to use care documentation appropriately.

As you do this you will, no doubt, be thinking about particular people you have cared for. It is important that you do not include information in your portfolio evidence that could be used to identify the people whose care you are discussing.

The DHSSPSNI Code of Practice on Protecting the Confidentiality of Service User Information (2012) offers clear guidance on the use of service user information for secondary purposes such as education. There is also a summary document that focuses on the key points relevant to health care staff. These are available at the following links:

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/confidentiality-code-of-practice0109.pdf>  
<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/staff-guidance-on-confidentiality0109.pdf>

The following principles of good practice are highlighted when you are considering how you translate your experiences into evidence for your portfolio:

- Be careful where you store your portfolio when you are **in practice** and **at home**. When you are in practice, make sure to ask the ward manager if there is a secure location where you can store your portfolio - please do not leave your portfolio on display in the care environment where anyone who is passing can take a look at the contents
- Any identifiable information should be anonymised – this means that **no names** or **health care numbers** should appear in any evidence or in any rough notes you make in practice to help you remember information about the care provided.
- Do not identify the **Trust** or specific name or location of the **care environment**. It should be sufficient to refer to a ward setting as surgical, medical or rehabilitation and a specific care setting as X-ray or the emergency department. Care should also be taken when referring to individual **staff members**. It is safer to refer to staff using their designation, for example, staff nurse, ward manager, health care assistant.
- Be careful when you are using notes during staff handovers. In some settings these may be hand written and it is tempting to use a notebook which you carry with you during your shift. It is safer to write any required information on a single sheet of paper that you can then refer to. Some wards use pre-printed handover sheets that contain the information required to plan your care. Regardless of the type of notes, they should be used only for the purposes of care giving and disposed of safely according to the Trust's procedures before you leave the ward at the end of your shift. If you are in any doubt, please discuss this with your mentor or the ward manager.

If you ever feel you need or are a risk of using service user information in your portfolio evidence that you feel could include personal identifiable information, please seek advice immediately from your mentor or your link lecturer. You will never be required to use information in such a way that individuals may be identified and as a result of discussing this with your mentor or link lecturer, you will find a way of meeting the requirements of your portfolio without compromising the people in your care, your colleagues or your professional legal duties.

### ***Authenticity***

Some examples of where you may be required to document your thought and responses to experiences you have in practice are in your worksheets and authenticated reflective accounts. For each of these forms of evidence, the signature of your mentor is needed to verify that you did what you have written that you did, or that the situation you reflected on did actually occur.

There may be times when you experience a situation and feel that it could have been handled differently or in a better way. If this is the case, it can be difficult to write clearly and honestly about it if you feel that those who will read it might feel you are judging them or their practice. It is very important to think carefully about these situations and to discuss what happened with your mentor before you start writing, in order to fully understand why the situation happened in the way that it did.

The focus of this discussion should be on the difference between your expectation and what happened. Often there is a reason why things don't always work out as they should, and your mentor should be able to explore this with you in the context of their experience and knowledge of the context of the care given. If you are writing a reflection, it is important to think about the reason for the reflection and the learning outcomes it relates to. If you can move the focus of the reflection away from the negative aspects that you may feel require you to be openly critical to the specific learning that you took away from the experience, this will help to avoid the dilemma of being truthful and not hurting other people's feelings. The learning you take away is then specific to you and will not place blame or judgement on the behaviour of others.

If a situation occurs in your practice where you feel the care you witnessed placed either a person in your care or a colleague at risk, you have a duty to disclose this using the procedure for raising and escalating concerns available online for all students to be familiar with.

In any situation where you are still unsure about how to present your reflective accounts or worksheets, please make contact with your link lecturer and ask to discuss it with them for additional guidance and support.

## **The Competency Framework**

The competency framework sets out the standards for competence and the related competencies that every nursing student must acquire before applying to be registered at first level on the nurses' part of the NMC register.

There are separate sets of competency requirements for each of the four fields of adult nursing, mental health nursing, learning disabilities nursing and children's nursing. Each set is laid out under the following four domains:

1. Professional values
2. Communication and interpersonal skills
3. Nursing practice and decision-making
4. Leadership, management and team working.

Each domain is comprised of a generic standard for competence and a field standard for competence. It also includes the generic competencies that all nurses must achieve and the field competencies to be achieved in each specific field. The number of field competencies varies in number in each domain and between nursing fields of practice.

## **Learning in the Context of Person Centred Nursing**

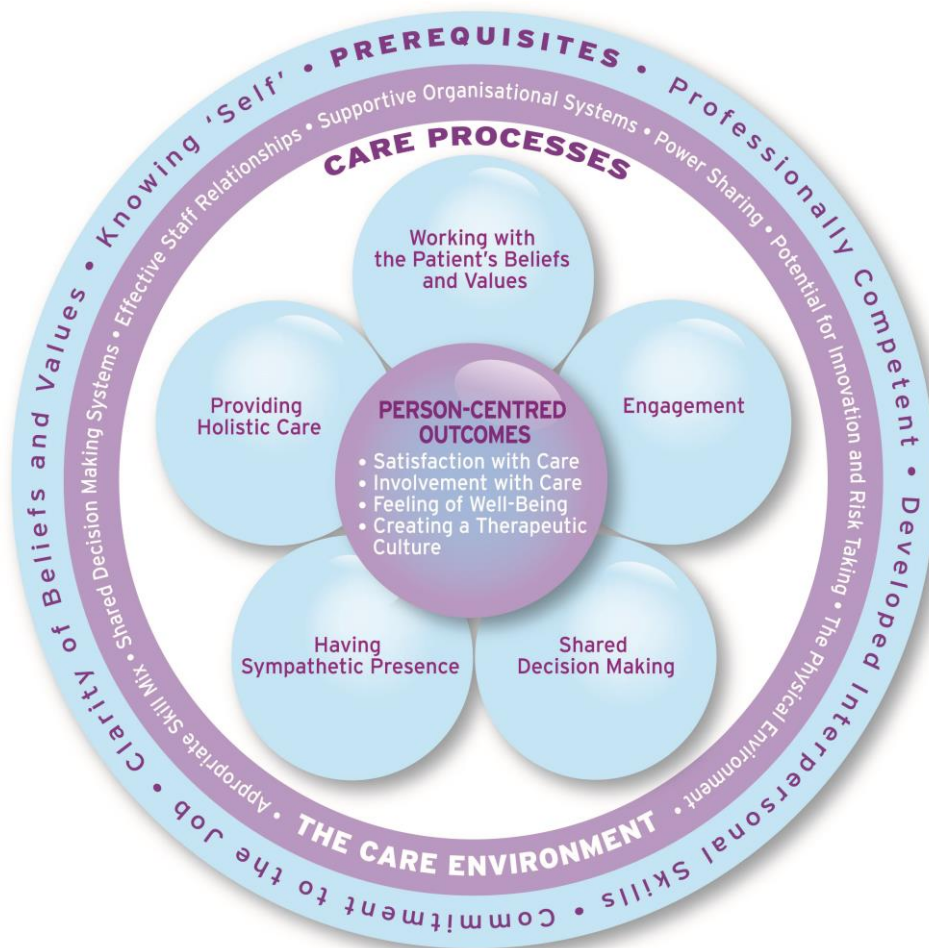
### ***The Person-Centred Nursing Framework***

Students on this programme will focus their learning development around the Person-Centred Nursing Framework (McCormack and McCance 2006, 2010) (see Figure 1). The ultimate aim is to develop Registered Nurses who are focused on person-centredness, and who will be equipped with the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to practice in such a way as to promote optimal person-centred outcomes. Developing nurses within this framework is seen as a way to realise person-centred practice. It is within the context of person-centredness that students are to develop their practice outcomes. Without this, there is a danger of a task orientated model of practice emerging, which is not in keeping with the person-centred approach to care being embraced by contemporary nursing or this programme. Students will undertake practice learning in environments where a variety of factors can influence the philosophy of care as a result of culture/microcultures, performance targets and financial constraints. To buffer against this, students, mentors and link lecturers should make themselves familiar with the Person-Centred Nursing Framework in order that practice outcomes are framed within this context. This will enable students to develop their skills within a holistic mind-set in order that they are practitioners who have the ability to deliver on person-centred



outcomes by the point of registration. Students and their mentors will be required to reflect on the students' development in relation to the four constructs and their components within the Person-Centred Nursing Framework throughout the programme.

**Figure 1: Person Centred Nursing Framework (McCormack and McCance, 2006, 2010)**



### Understanding the Components of the Person-Centred Nursing Framework

This handbook intends to provide a brief overview of the Person-Centred Nursing Framework. Students will have been introduced to the framework in more detail in class, and further information is available in McCormack and McCance (2010). The origins of the framework originate in research undertaken by the authors who had undertaken work on caring in nursing as perceived by those receiving care and those providing care (McCormack and McCance 2010). Caring is crucial to nursing within this framework, a central component of practice that distinguishes nursing from technical practices. The Person-Centred Nursing Framework is comprised of four key constructs:

**Pre-requisites:** This focuses on the attributes of the nurse. These are fundamental in pre-registration education as without these attributes, the remaining constructs cannot be addressed. The attributes are identified as:

- Professionally competent
- Developed interpersonal skills
- Commitment to the job
- Clarity of beliefs and values
- Knowing self.

These prerequisites are very closely aligned to the four domains within which sit the generic and field specific competencies for students to achieve by the point of registration, namely; (1) professional values, (2) communication and interpersonal skills, (3) nursing practice and decision making, and (4) leadership, management and team working.

**Care environment:** This component of the model focuses on the context within which care is provided. This includes:

- Appropriate skill mix
- Shared decision making systems
- Effective staff relationships
- Supportive organisational systems
- Power sharing
- Potential for innovation and risk taking
- The physical environment.

For many students, the care environment is new, and the influence of dynamics of the care environment can often be something that is underestimated by students. For those with past care experiences, they are returning to care environments as a student of nursing, whereby a shift in perspective is often occurring. Previous pre-conceived perspectives on the care environment may be present that require a refocus on person-centred care. As students progress through their programme, and particularly in Year 3, they will increasingly be expected to learn skills to influence these components of the care environment.

**Care processes:** This component of the model focuses on the actual operationalisation of person-centred care through a range of activities. It is crucial that students delivery care in a way that takes accounts of the attributes of this component of the framework. These are identified as:

- Working with the patient's beliefs and values
- Engagement
- Shared decision making
- Having sympathetic presence
- Providing holistic care.

Students are expected to delivery care that takes these into account, which include a high degree of effective communication skills that require a therapeutic engagement with the person. There is a need for collaborative working with the person, with a true acknowledgement of who they are, their aspirations and the provision of care that is centred around their holistic needs.

**Person-centred outcomes:** Should the first three constructs be achieved, the results should be:

- Satisfaction with care
- Involvement with care
- Feeling of well-being
- Creating a therapeutic culture.

Through identifying that these have been achieved, those delivering care can confirm that person-centred nursing has taken place.

It is recognised that care, culture and practice are constantly evolving. Person-centred care is multifactorial. Blending each of the constructs together through addressing each of their attributes is a complex and skills process. Developing the skills, mind-set, and professional basis by which to achieve the person-centred nurse is the focus of practice learning, set around the core and field specific competencies identified by the NMC.

## **Integrating the Person-Centred Nursing Framework into practice learning**

In order to ensure that the Person-Centred Nursing Framework is influential in the development of a student nurse, their practice learning needs to be influenced by the framework itself. This can be achieved through the use of learning contracts if recommended by the link lecturer / mentor or required by the student. Learning contracts will be explored later in this handbook. Through achieving practice outcomes the student will provide nursing care which leads to people being provided care with which they are satisfied with, have meaningful involvement in, and have the experience of care within a culture that is therapeutic. Additionally, the formative review at the end of practice learning experience requires both student and mentor to reflect on progress in becoming a person-centred nurse and areas for development.

### **Key Roles and Responsibilities**

The key roles of the student, mentor and link lecturer are detailed further in this handbook. Each party should refer to these to ensure they have clarity with regards to their role.

It should be noted that practice learning is student driven. This means that:

- **Students** are required to take an adult learning approach to practice learning, whereby the responsibility for ensuring they meet their practice outcomes to the required standard with supporting evidence is the student's. Should a student have concerns with regards to meeting their practice learning outcomes in time for the summative assessment, they are responsible for addressing this through their mentor and link lecturer.
- **Mentors** are in place to support, facilitate learning through providing opportunities and instruction and assess student learning.
- **Link Lecturers** are in place to facilitate learning through providing opportunities and guide mentors and students while also ensuring the practice learning environment is of a suitable standard for students.

### **Practice Learning and Portfolios**

New nurses will be expected to meet the essential mental and physical health needs of people of all ages and conditions, as well as in their own field of practice (NMC 2010). The NMC envisage students learning across a diverse range of settings with a focus on the journey of the person receiving care, a journey that reflects the current and future configuration of services. Practice learning constitutes 50% of this programme. With practice learning, students are expected to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes to become a registered nurse, applying the theoretical aspects of the programme into the provision of person-centred care. In order to achieve this, students will develop a portfolio that demonstrates how they have met the core and field specific competencies with supporting evidence. Practice learning throughout the programme will provide students with experience of 24-hour and seven day care.

Over the required 2,300 hours of practice learning, students will have the opportunity to learn in direct contact with healthy and ill people and communities. Students will be required to use this experience to organise, deliver and evaluate their nursing care on the basis of the knowledge and skills they have acquired. Theory and practice learning will address essential physical and mental health needs of all people, including babies, children and young people, pregnant and postnatal women, adults and older people. This includes people with acute and long term conditions, people requiring end of life care, people with learning disabilities and people with mental health problems.

In order to achieve this, students will have to meet a required number of practice outcomes over the duration of their programme. These are identified in each portfolio, with students having one portfolio for each year of the programme. These outcomes are directly developed from the NMC Essential

Skills Clusters and Core and Field specific competencies. Students will access practice learning experience in both hospital and community settings in each part of the programme.

Developing a portfolio of evidence is largely a self-determined process whereby evidence is created through documenting learning experiences. In order to achieve this, a learning environment that incorporates opportunities for analysis of learning is fundamental. This will allow a facilitated learning approach and will encourage constructive dialogue between student, mentor and link lecturer that is focused on learning. The portfolio is the vehicle for this, providing opportunities for these processes to take place, primarily through reflective processes and discussion.

## **Supporting for Learning in Practice**

Throughout the practice learning component of this programme students will have the support of a mentor for at least 40% of the time during periods of practice learning. This support will involve practice that is supervised directly or indirectly at all times during practice learning by a mentor or other suitably prepared registered professional. In order to maximise access to learning opportunities, students have a supernumerary status during all practice learning experience. Supernumerary means that the student will not, as part of their programme of preparation, be contracted by any person or body to provide nursing care.

To complement this, students will also have the support of a link lecturer, who is a member of academic staff within the School of Nursing who has developed links and collaborative relationships with the areas they are associated with. Their role is outlined later in this handbook, and includes support and directing students and mentors as well as ensuring the learning environment is of the required standard through undertaking an educational audit in collaboration with practice partners.

## **Assessment of Practice Learning Across the Programme**

A nurse mentor who has completed specific preparation in assessing students is responsible for ongoing supervision and assessment in practice settings and in simulation. Other registered professionals who have been suitably prepared can supervise and contribute towards the assessment of nursing students. Judgments made at the summative assessment of practice outcome at the end of each part of the programme are to be based on all the learning achieved in that part. In effect, summative assessments occur at the end of each year of the programme based on the learning achieved within that year. The ongoing achievement record (portfolio) must be used to support the judgment made.

During the final 12 week period of practice learning at the end of the programme, a sign-off mentor, who is registered in the field of practice that the student intends to enter, makes a final judgement of competence through the summative assessment. The evidence in the portfolio must show that the student is safe and effective in practice at the end of the programme. Where a sign-off mentor has concerns about a student's overall competence at the end of the programme, they must draw on evidence from the ongoing achievement record and the practice learning portfolio for the whole programme to make their final assessment decision.

## **Tripartite Assessments – Formative and Summative**

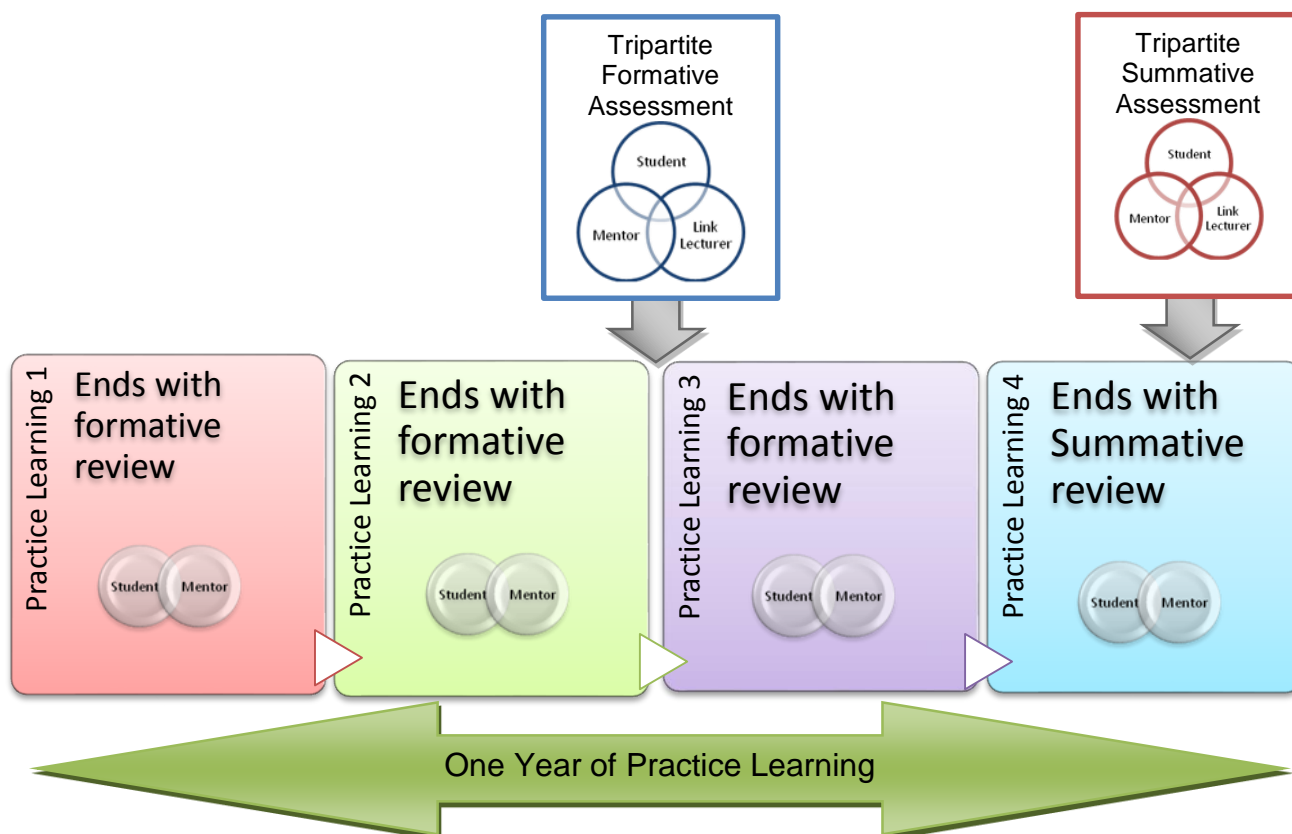
Assessments in practice are composed of the following (see Figure 2):

- Formative reviews at the end of each practice learning experience. These formative assessments contribute to the Ongoing Achievement Record and the tripartite formative and summative assessments.
- Tripartite formative assessment halfway through the total weeks of practice learning for that year. The purpose of the tripartite formative assessment is to identify progress to date and to focus the student's learning on the competencies that remain to be achieved before the next

summative assessment. Additionally, evidence within the portfolio to date is reviewed to ensure it is of sufficient standard to support the achievement of the learning outcomes met to date.

- Tripartite summative assessment at the end of each year, corresponding with the two progressions points and the final assessment at the end of the programme.

**Figure 2: Assessment Strategy Across 1 Year of Practice Learning**



### Progression Points

The NMC require two progression points that separate the programme into three equal parts. These are at the end of Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme. In order for the student to progress through a progression point, they must have met identified standards. These are mapped into the practice outcomes for each year of the programme which are formally assessed through a tripartite summative assessment at each progression point.

**Progression Point 1:** The first progression point is at the end of year one and may be assessed by a nurse mentor or other registered professionals who have been suitably prepared.

**Progression Point 2:** To pass the second progression point the student will need to demonstrate that they can be more independent and take more responsibility for their own learning and practice. The summative assessment at the second progression point must be undertaken by a mentor who is a nurse registered in any of the four fields of practice.

**Final Assessment:** The summative assessment at the end of Year 3, which determines achievement of competence in practice for entry to the register, must be made by a registered nurse sign-off mentor from the same nursing field as that which the student intends to enter.

The following two pages Figures 3 and 4 illustrate the organisation of practice learning and theory across the three years of the programme.

**Figure 3: Practice Learning Experiences Map – Adult Nursing**

2016													2017																																						
S	October					November				December				January				February				March				April			May			June			July			August			Sept										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
Year 1	Understanding Adult Nursing								Adult Com	Christmas	Christmas	Adult Community				Fostering Safe Holistic Care								Easter	AD Hos	AD Hospital	AD Community	LD + MH			Adult Hospital			Study	Resit	Resit	Holidays	Holidays	Holidays	Holidays											
	Care Compassion and Communication								Adult Hosp			Adult Hospital				Understanding Evidence for Person-Centred Nursing									AD Com			Adult Hospital			Adult Community																				
	The Well Person in Body and Mind									Adult Hospital				The Well Person in Society								LD + MH	Adult Hospital			Adult Community																									
																					AD Hos	LD + MH			Adult Hospital			Adult Community																							
																					AD Com	LD + MH			Adult Hospital			Adult Community																							
Year 2	Applied Human Sciences for Nursing				PH	Christmas	Christmas	Study	Exam	PH	Community				Adult Hospital				Study	Easter	Interprofessional and Collaborative Working						Adult Hospital		Holidays	Holidays	Holidays	Holidays																			
	Comprehensive Nursing Assessment and Practice				PH					Community				Adult Hospital				Promoting Health and Wellbeing						Adult Hospital																											
	Nursing the Person with Complex Needs				Com	Adult Hospital				PH	Community				Adult Hospital				PH		Com		Understanding Research						Community																						
					Ad H	Adult Hospital				PH				Com										Community																											
					Ad H	Adult Hospital				PH				Com										Community																											
					Ad H	Adult Hospital				Public				Ad Hosp				Com										Community																							
Year 3	Person-Centredness	Adult Community				in Adult Nursing Practice (cont'd)				Christmas	Christmas	Study	Study	Issues in Contemporary Professional Nursing Practice								Easter	Adult Hospital				Exam	Management Hospital or Community						Holidays	Holidays	Management Hospital or Community	Theory	Holidays	Holidays												
	The Reflective	Adult Hospital				and Innovative Nurse (cont'd)								Applying Professional Values in Practice									Adult Community																												
	The Safe					and Effective Nurse (cont'd)				Developing a Nursing Research Proposal																																									

Figure 4: Practice Learning Experiences Map – Mental Health Nursing

		2016												2017																																							
		S	October				November				December				January			February			March			April		May			June		July			August			Sept																
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
		26/09/2016	03/10/2016	10/10/2016	17/10/2016	24/10/2016	31/10/2016	07/11/2016	14/11/2016	21/11/2016	28/11/2016	05/12/2016	12/12/2016	19/12/2016	26/12/2016	02/01/2017	09/01/2017	16/01/2017	23/01/2017	30/01/2017	06/02/2017	13/02/2017	20/02/2017	27/02/2017	06/03/2017	13/03/2017	20/03/2017	27/03/2017	03/04/2017	10/04/2017	17/04/2017	24/04/2017	01/05/2017	08/05/2017	15/05/2017	22/05/2017	29/05/2017	05/06/2017	12/06/2017	19/06/2017	26/06/2017	03/07/2017	10/07/2017	17/07/2017	24/07/2017	31/07/2017	07/08/2017	14/08/2017	21/08/2017	28/08/2017	04/09/2017	11/09/2017	18/09/2017
Year 1	Understanding Adult Nursing	Com						Christmas		Community				Fostering Safe Holistic Care						PH	Easter	PH (Adult)			LD	Hospital																											
	Care Compassion and Communication	Hosp						Christmas		Hospital				Understanding Evidence for Person-Centred Nursing								LD	Easter	PH (Adult)			LD	Community																									
	The Well Person in Body and Mind													The Well Person in Society																																							
Year 2	Nursing the Person with Mental Health Difficulties, etc	Com						Christmas		Community				Hospital				Study	Easter			Principles of Therapeutic Group Work							Study	Holidays	Hospital																						
	Mental Ill Health and the Human Experience	Hosp						Christmas		Hospital				Community						Exam	Easter	Promoting health and Wellbeing in Mental Health Settings						Study			Holidays	Community																					
	Holistic Mental Health Nursing Care																					Understanding Research																															
Year 3	Person-Centredness	Community						Christmas		in Mental Health Nursing Practice (cont'd)				Leadership, Management and Team Working in Contemporary MH Nursing Practice						C	Easter	Community			Exam	Management Hospital or Community																											
	The Reflective	Hospital						Christmas		and Innovative Nurse (cont'd)				Applying Professional Values in Mental Health Nursing Practice				H	Easter			Hospital																															
	The Safe									and Effective Mental Health Nurse (cont'd)				Developing a Nursing Research Proposal																																							

## Completing a Tripartite Formative Assessment

The Tripartite Formative Assessment is completed halfway through the number of practice learning weeks for the year the student is in. In other words, they normally take place at the following times in the following years:

### Tripartite Formative Assessments

Year 1 AD Week 33  
Year 1 MH Week 37

Year 2 AD and MH  
Week 24

Year 3 AD and MH  
Week 33

**Note:** Mentors may provisionally review the student's progress in achieving practice learning outcomes in preparation for the tripartite formative assessment. This would involve viewing the evidence and documentation within the portfolio.

### *Stages of a Tripartite Formative Assessment*

The Tripartite Formative Assessment should follow the following process:

1. The student, mentor and link lecturer should agree a date and time to undertake the formative assessment. This will need commitment from all parties to dedicate time to undertake the process.
2. The student is responsible for providing all of the portfolio documentation to date, set out in a logical order.
3. Student, mentor and link lecturer should:
  - a. Review the student's achievement towards the practice outcomes and determine whether there is sufficient evidence to support their achievement.
  - b. Record those practice outcomes achieved within the grid provided.
  - c. Review the student's achievement within the Skills Development Record.
  - d. Record a summary of a. – c. above.
  - e. Record a summary of key areas for development in order for the student to focus on achieving the remaining practice outcomes for the summative assessment and progression point/sign-off. This should include reviewing the Ongoing Achievement Record to date, in particular the **Final Discussions**.



## Completing a Tripartite Summative Assessment

The Tripartite Summative Assessment is completed two weeks prior to the end of practice learning weeks for the year the student is in. Students have two opportunities to pass the summative assessment in order to meet the criteria to pass the progression point/enter the register:

### Tripartite Summative Assessments (First Opportunity)

Year 1 AD and MH

Week 43

Year 2 AD and MH

Week 47

Year 3 AD and MH

Week 47

**Note:** Mentors may provisionally review the student's progress in achieving practice learning outcomes in preparation for the tripartite formative assessment. This would involve viewing the evidence and documentation within the portfolio.

### Stages of a Tripartite Summative Assessment

The Tripartite Summative Assessment should follow the following process:

1. The student, mentor and link lecturer should agree a date and time to undertake the summative assessment. This will need commitment from all parties to dedicate time to undertake the process.
2. The student is responsible for providing all of the portfolio documentation to date, set out in a logical order.
3. Student, mentor and link lecturer should:
  - a. Review the student's achievement towards **all** the practice outcomes and determine whether there is sufficient evidence to support their achievement. All outcomes must be achieved and have sufficient evidence.
  - b. Review the student's achievement towards all the skills within the Skills Development Record.
  - c. Review the student's achievement of skills required over three years prior to entry to Nursing Midwifery Council Register (NMC).
  - d. If a. and b. are fully achieved, then the student has passed the practice requirements for the progression point/entry to the register. The students complete their final two weeks of practice learning to consolidate their practice.
  - e. If a. and b. are not yet fully achieved, then:
    - i. The practice outcomes not yet achieved are to be identified on the grid
    - ii. Skills not achieved need to be identified by number
    - iii. An action plan to achieve these practice outcomes and/or skills is developed
    - iv. After two weeks, the summative assessment is completed again as for a. and above.
  - f. Students must have achieved all skills in c. prior to entry to the NMC register.
  - g. Students have only two attempts to pass the summative assessment. Should any practice outcome or skill not be achieved by the second attempt, then the student has not satisfied the criteria to pass the practice component to meet the progression point criteria. The consequences of this are managed at the formal Board of Examiners.

## Using the Portfolio to Structure Learning in Practice

The portfolio is the tool used by students, mentors and link lecturers to structure and evidence learning in practice. It is structured in such a way that development is informed by planning, implementing and feeding back in order that an informed journey of learning is facilitated for the student.

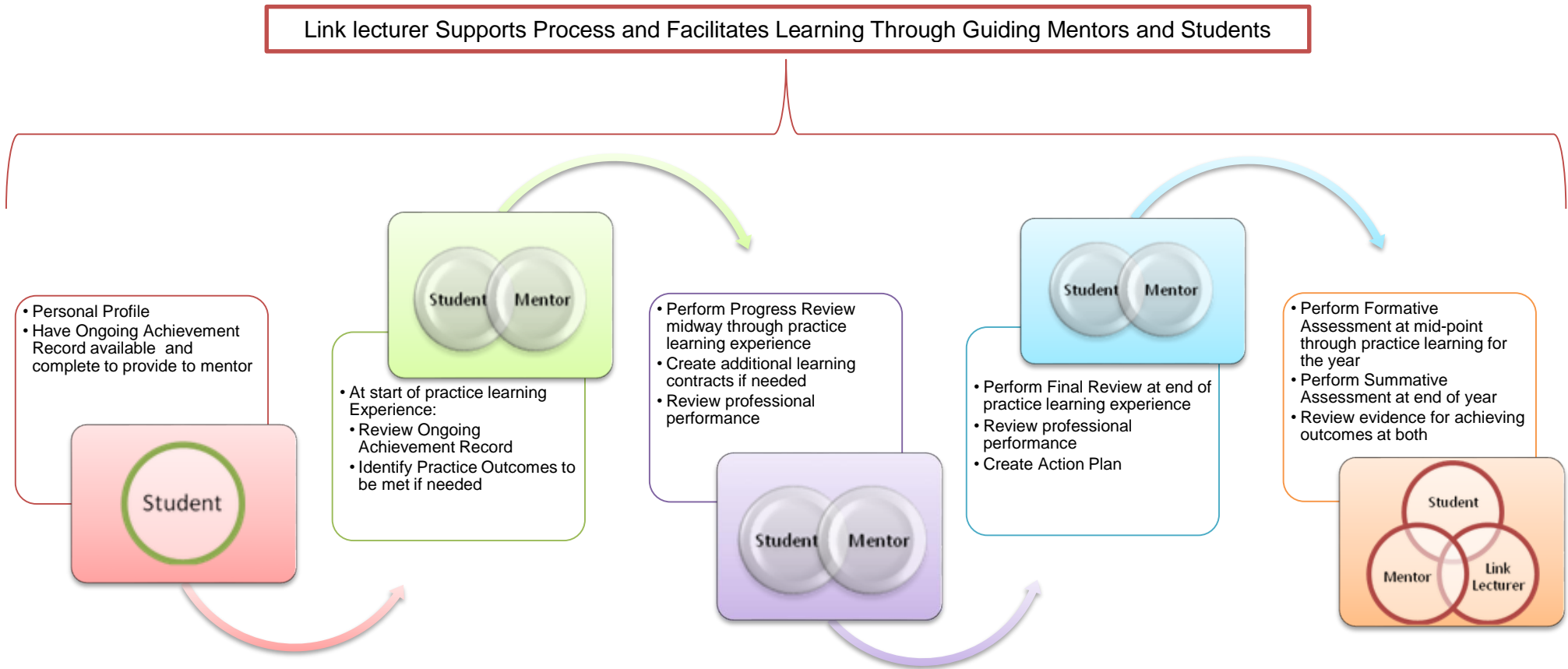
### ***Student profile and learning styles analysis***

The portfolio begins with the student providing a profile of who they are, their background and their aspirations. The purpose of this is to guide the mentor in how best to support the student through illustrating their background and any skills the student brings with them.

Planning Learning to Achieve Practice Outcomes (see Figure 5):

1. At the start of a period of practice learning:
  - Once a student commences a new block of practice learning, they should provide their Ongoing Achievement Record to their mentor within five days (see Appendix 1). This will illustrate to the mentor what progress has been achieved to date and what the foci for learning should be leading up to the summative assessment at the end of the year.
  - The student and mentor should review what practice outcomes have been achieved to date, including any action plans from the previous practice learning experience, and also consider what skills should be addressed within the skills development record.
  - The student and mentor should identify what sources of evidence will validate the achievement of practice outcomes.
  - All of this should be documented in the Initial Discussion, which forms part of the Ongoing Achievement Record.
  - Further details on identifying sources of evidence are presented later in this handbook.
  
2. Halfway through a period of practice learning:
  - At this point, student and mentor should review progress towards achieving learning outcomes.
  - Achievements to date are acknowledged and the mentor must review the student's performance in line with four statements taken directly from the NMC *Guidance on Professional Conduct for Nursing and Midwifery Students* (2011). Any concerns along the way must be recorded here.
  
3. At the end of a period of practice learning:
  - At this point, the student and mentor should review which practice outcomes have been achieved over the period of practice learning.
  - Again, the mentor must review the student's performance in line with four statements taken directly from the NMC *Guidance on Professional Conduct for Nursing and Midwifery Students* (2011), documenting any concerns.
  - In line with NMC requirements, the student and mentor must reflect and document the student's strengths in developing as a person-centred nurse, and also identify any areas for development.
  - Areas for development must then translate into the action plan.

**Figure 5: Journey Through Practice Learning Using Portfolio**



## Developing a Portfolio of Evidence

Across the programme, students will need to review the practice outcomes to be achieved across the year, identify their learning needs, develop plans to address these needs and provide evidence that they have achieved the outcomes. This requires students and mentors to review the practice outcomes and plan activities to achieve them. There are a variety of sources of evidence that can be used to support achievement (see Figure 6):

- Verified by mentor **not** to be submitted
- Reflections
- Feedback from others
- Certified attendance at in-service education
- Record of Additional Activities (eg for skills acquisition)
- Teaching Plans
- Service user/carer feedback

The student and mentor must decide what evidence will be needed to demonstrate achievement of the NMC outcome. On reviewing the evidence, the mentor must be satisfied that the quality of the evidence is sufficient to support their decision that the learning outcome has been achieved. On reviewing evidence and student performance a learning contract may need to be developed. Figure 7 illustrates the cycle that students engage in with their mentors to use a learning contract to facilitate learning. On page 30 a sample learning contract for Year 1 is presented. This contract draws from the practice outcomes for Interprofessional learning, and indicates the activities that will be engaged in to meet the outcomes, and the evidence associated with it.

It is important to also be aware of what is not evidence of achievement, remembering that it is not quantity that is important, but quality and relevance of the evidence. Items not accepted as evidence include:

- Photocopies of articles, policies or leaflets
- Material that has not been developed by the student
- Material that is not relevant to the practice outcome it is being aligned with.

**Figure 6: Types of Evidence**



## Practice Learning Worksheets

A number of practice learning worksheets are to be completed in and across each year of the programme. The intention of these worksheets is to focus learning on the achievement of specific practice learning outcomes within a particular context. These include worksheets on:

- Health and well-being
- Care of children
- Care of people with mental health problems
- Care of people with learning disabilities
- Interprofessional learning

The completion of these worksheets are explicitly linked to practice outcomes and so they should be completed in sufficient time and detail for the summative assessment. These must be authenticated by the mentor.

## Service User and Carer Evaluation of Student's Development

### *Involving service users and carers in student assessment*

In order for students to gain insight into their performance and ongoing development, the NMC requires that service users and carers have the opportunity to contribute to the assessment of performance at stages throughout the programme.

At each progression point you are required to provide evidence from service users and carers in relation to specific practice outcomes. These are identified in each portfolio.

### *Safeguarding service users and carers*

It is important that students remain aware that people in their care, and their carers/families, may feel vulnerable with regards to providing feedback about student performance. It is essential that everyone is clear about their role and how this process of engagement will be managed.

1. Feedback should normally be sought from service users and carers/families by the mentor.
2. Mentors should seek the consent of service users and carers/families who are involved in providing feedback. Service users and carers/families should be informed that:
  - a. They can decline to participate in providing feedback about students and that this will not impact upon the care they receive
  - b. If they consent to being involved that the source of the feedback will not be disclosed to the student. The mentor will provide a copy of the documentation and invite the service users/ carers to complete this. The mentor may provide assistance if required/ requested. Mentors should confirm that what they have recorded accurately represents the views of the service users and carers/families
  - c. No identifying details will be recorded on the documentation. Their care will not be affected by the views they provide in their feedback.
  - d. Feedback received will help to inform the student's development across their programme.
  - e. The student will not fail the practice learning component of their programme based on their feedback, but it will contribute to the overall assessment process.
3. Service users and carers/families feedback should be sought approximately halfway through the practice learning experience in that particular practice learning environment.

4. The mentor should sign and date the documentation to confirm that the information was obtained from service users and carers/families.
5. The mentor should discuss the feedback with the student and record this within the portfolio.
6. Should the feedback highlight any areas of concern, a learning contract must be developed by the student and mentor to address these areas of concern. Part of this contract must include obtaining a second set of feedback from service users and carers/families to monitor development.

Service users and carers/families feedback should be stored safely within the portfolio and must be available for the summative assessment in order to confirm achievement of the linked practice learning outcomes.

## DEVELOPING SKILLS IN PRACTICE

Students will be prepared with the core concepts for the skills that they will undertake in practice during theory blocks. Students will have records of which skills they have undertaken in the skills suite at the University within their ongoing achievement record. Skills not listed in this document, and which the mentor identifies as required in the practice learning area, and which are appropriate for undergraduate nursing students, are to be taught, recorded and supervised by the mentor. The mentor will retain accountability for such teaching.

### The Skills Development Record

Each student will have a Skills Development Record for each year of the programme. All skills must be achieved for that year. Additionally each student will have an additional skills record which **must** be achieved prior to entry to the NMC Register (Year 3 final assessment). This skills record **must** be carried forward in your portfolio each year. Students should actively seek the opportunity to practice and develop these skills throughout all practice learning experiences. Skills are linked to the NMC Essential Skills Clusters, progression point criteria and NMC standards and form the evidence required for the achievement of practice learning outcomes for that year of the programme. The following key is used to indicate the student's level of achievement:

**Yes:** *Student demonstrates they can practice this skill to the expected standard*

Should a mentor indicate **Yes** for any skill, they are verifying that the student has performed this skill to the required standard. This means that at that point in time the student achieved the skill. However, the student is expected to retain that standard and should be reassessed on this skill during other practice learning experience where the opportunity exists to do so, either directly in that practice learning environment, through accessing the opportunity elsewhere through arrangement with the mentor, or undertaking the skill by simulation with the mentor.

**No:** *Student does not yet demonstrate they can practice this skill to the expected standard*

Should a mentor indicate **No** for any skill, they are verifying that the student has performed the skill but not to the required standard. **No** should not be indicated if the student did not have the opportunity to undertake the skill either through accessing it (with facilitation by the mentor) in another practice learning setting, or through simulation with the mentor.

If a student is scored with a **No**, an action plan should be created to develop that skill either within that practice learning experience or in the next practice learning experience (where another practice learning experience exists prior to the summative assessment).

Should a **No** remain against a skill for all practice learning experiences by the time of the first opportunity for the summative assessment, the student will not meet the standard for that progression point, unless the skill has been identified as optional. The student will have a two week period within which to achieve this skill and this should be documented in the two week action plan. Should the skill still not be achieved by the final opportunity summative assessment, the student will not meet the standard to proceed through the progression point, unless the skill has been identified as optional.

**S.** Skills achieved by simulation.

**ONA:** *The opportunity to put this skill into practice was not available during this practice learning experience.*

Before a mentor selects this category for skill achievement, they must have ensured that an opportunity to gain the skill either directly in the practice learning area or through identifying an



opportunity to gain the skill in an area associated with that practice learning area (eg arranging for a student to attend theatre from a surgical ward, endoscopy suite from a medical ward) or through simulating the skill (for example, CPR). Selecting **ONA** for a skill means that a student has not been assessed in their ability to undertake this skill. **ONA** cannot be recorded against a skill for every practice learning experience in that year, the student must be afforded the opportunity to achieve the skill before the final opportunity for the summative assessment, unless the skill has been identified as optional.

## Evaluating Progress in Skills Development

The following principles should be followed by students and mentors on each practice learning experience:

- At the beginning of each practice learning experience, the student and mentor should review progress in skill development to date on previous practice learning experiences. The link lecturer will support the development of skills through teaching the student and guiding both student and mentor on how skills may be achieved.
- The student and mentor should identify skills that either achieved a No or ONA so that they are prioritised to develop during the current practice learning experience through a learning contract.
- The student and mentor should also identify out of the remaining skills how each of these could be met either directly in that practice learning environment, in an associated practice learning environment or through simulation.
- Progress in achieving skills should be reviewed at the Progress Review and any opportunities not yet accessed should be facilitated for the student by the mentor.
- The student and mentor should complete the Skills Development Record on the Final Discussion and Feedback, and score achievement in all skills with either a **Yes, No, S** or **ONA**. Any **No** or **ONA** should be addressed in the action plan for the next practice learning experience.
- Students cannot achieve the criteria for the summative assessment with a **No** remaining against any skill, or **ONA** only for any skill, unless the skill has been identified as optional.

## **AUTHENTICATED REFLECTIVE ACCOUNTS – GUIDE FOR STUDENTS**

The reflection process has developed over time and is used widely in Nursing. It is widely recognised as an invaluable learning method, providing fresh insights that enable practitioners to enhance health care practice and thus improve the quality of care. The reflective process develops awareness of thoughts (intellectual), feelings (affective), and actions or omissions (behaviour), relating to a particular experience or area of practice.

Throughout each year of the programme a number of practice learning outcomes require reflective accounts to be documented to evidence their achievement. These must be authenticated by a mentor and must be present within the portfolio for the summative assessment for you mentor and link lecturer to review.

Reflections are an account of your experiences. Reflections underpin professional practice and therefore must be truthful and authentic. To ensure truthfulness Mentors and Link Lecturers are encouraged to embrace the opportunity for positive development from reflections within a cultural of learning. Students will be accountable for what is disclosed in reflections. The information recorded will help you focus on your thoughts, feelings and actions in practice, with a view to improvement. To facilitate professional development, select events and situations which are of particular significance to you and which will meet the identified practice learning outcomes. Reflections should be succinct but also have depth and completion. The following points may assist this process, remembering that the focus is on your learning and development:

- Reflections to be personal and specific to the student perspective.
- Events which are a particularly good example of your practice, outlining reasons why you deem this to be so.
- Events that are meaningful, perhaps in terms of representing a key decision or dilemma.
- Events where you now think you would have done things differently and an analysis of why this was so.
- Raising and escalating concerns protocol should be followed were required.
- Situations where you feel challenged by lack of knowledge, experience, skill or resources.
- Events about which you feel uncomfortable, these might involve moral or ethical dilemmas.

Rather than describing events and situations, the focus needs to be on analysing the effect that the experience(s) has had upon you. Be reasonably succinct in what you write but use extra sheets if you need to. The modified stages of Johns (2009) model guide your reflection on practice but does not need to be followed slavishly. Reflective skills are development in nature, and so we propose that students use the following guide to completing reflections based on their stage of the programme (see next page).

## Year One Reflection

1

- Describe the experience of the situation you are reflecting upon. What is the issue/what was/is it like?
- What are/were the key issues?

2

- How do you feel about the experience?
- Think about your own feelings now/at the time.
- Think about the feelings of others.
- What were you trying to achieve?
- Why did you act as you did?
- What impact did my action have on the person, family, my colleagues or other people?

3

- How do you make sense now of the whole experience?
- What assumptions have you made?
- What bits are clear and what bits are unclear?
- Has it led you to asking other questions?
- Has it left you wanting to explore more feelings/doubts/thoughts?

4

- What have I learned about my practice from this experience?
- Is what I have learned about the way I practice everyday?
- Has it raised any ethical issues? Have I learned about ethical issues?
- What have I learned about myself - of how I react and do things the way I do?
- Which aspects of this reflection would I like to concentrate and/or act on?

## Year Two Reflection

1

- Identify the Issue - Name it

2

- Describe the experience of the situation you are reflecting upon. What is the issue/what was/is it like?
- What are/were the key issues?

3

- How do you feel about the experience? Think about your own feelings now/at the time and think about the feelings of others

4

- What options do/did you have in the situation when it was happening? What options do you have now? What would/will you do?

5

- What influenced your decision?
- What kind of things would those actions lead to?
- What would the consequences be?
- Have the results been positive or negative or are they ongoing?

6

- What happened as a result of those actions that you took? For you? For the situation? For other people?

7

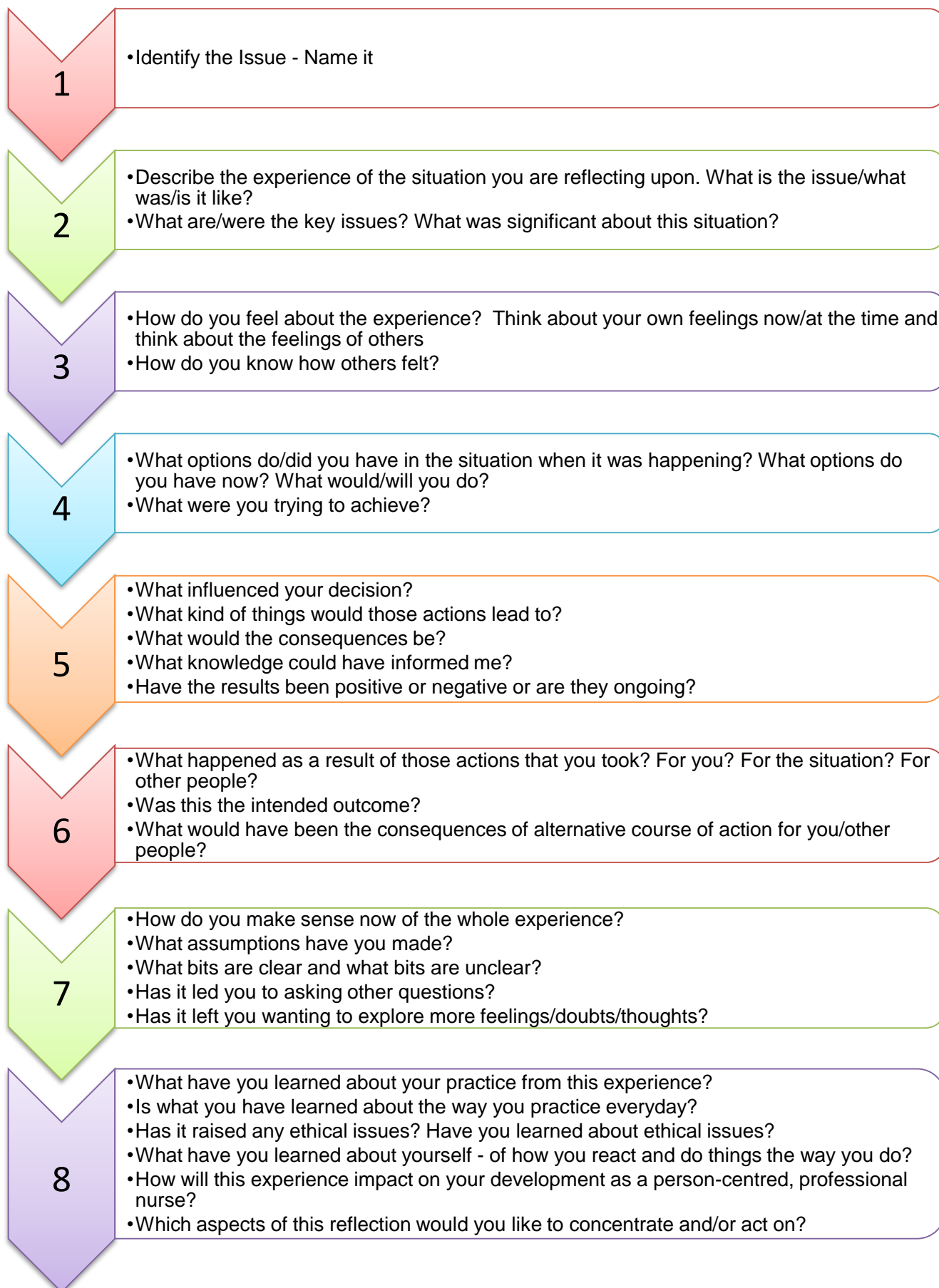
- How do you make sense now of the whole experience?
- What assumptions have you made?
- What bits are clear and what bits are unclear?
- Has it led you to asking other questions?
- Has it left you wanting to explore more feelings/doubts/thoughts?

8

- What have you learned about your practice from this experience?
- Is what you have learned about the way you practice everyday?
- Has it raised any ethical issues? Have you learned about ethical issues?
- What have you learned about yourself - of how you react and do things the way you do?
- Which aspects of this reflection would you like to concentrate and/or act on?

Adapted from Johns (2009) Model of Reflection  
Johns, C. 2009. *Becoming a Reflective Practitioner* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Oxford: Blackwell

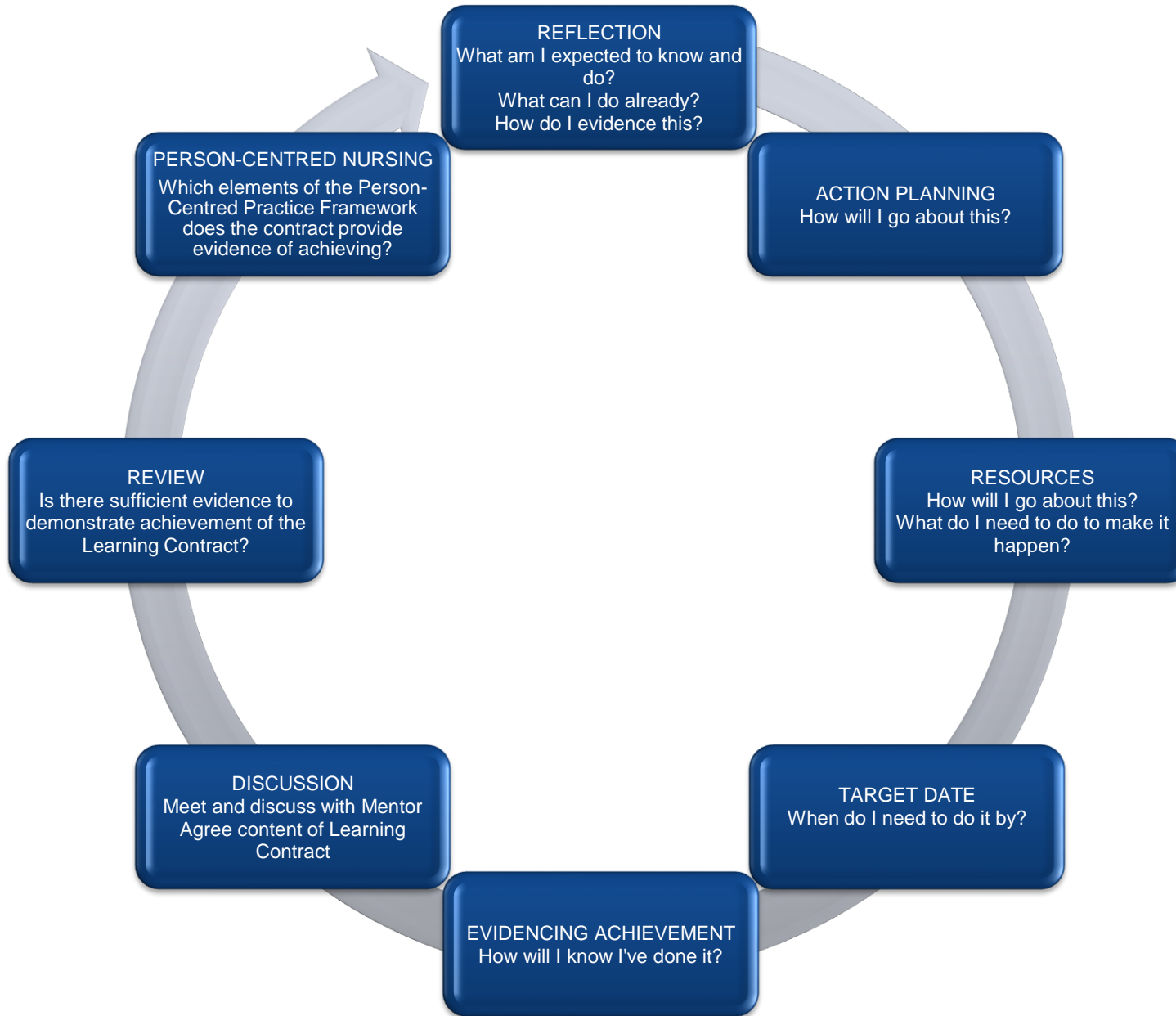
## Year Three Reflection



Adapted from Johns (2009) Model of Reflection

Johns, C. 2009. *Becoming a Reflective Practitioner* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Oxford: Blackwell

**Figure 7: Learning Contract Cycle**



## LEARNING CONTRACT

<b>What will be the overall Focus of my learning?</b>			
I will focus on developing my knowledge, skills and awareness in working interprofessionally so that that I can ensure a seamless provision of person-centred care.			
<i><b>What do I expect to have achieved? (Specifically)</b></i>	<i><b>How will I achieve this learning?</b></i>	<i><b>What do I need to help me achieve this learning?</b></i>	<i><b>What is the evidence that I have achieved it?</b></i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I will be able to engage with people and build caring professional relationships.</li> <li>2. I will have evaluated ways in which my interactions affect relationships to ensure that they do not impact inappropriately on others.</li> <li>3. I will have developed communication skills (oral and written) to effectively and clearly communicate people's stated needs and wishes to other professionals.</li> <li>4. I will have learned how to share information with colleagues and seek advice from appropriate sources where there is a concern or uncertainty.</li> <li>5. I will be able to recognise, and work within, the limitations of my knowledge and skills and professional boundaries, understanding that I responsible for my own actions.</li> <li>6. I will demonstrate that I can act in a way that values the roles and responsibilities of others in the team and interacts appropriately.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a plan with my Mentor to spend some time with students or registered professionals from a range of health and social care professions in practice.</li> <li>2. Provide a brief overview of a person being cared for, including a summary of their health and nursing needs.</li> <li>3. Identify those professionals involved in the care of this person and their family.</li> <li>4. Seek to understand the role of each professional.</li> <li>5. Determine how each professional contributes to the care of the person and family in order for the best possible outcomes to be achieved, giving examples.</li> <li>6. Determine how these professionals communicate effectively within this care setting.</li> <li>7. Reflect on the provision of care to this person, and reflect on the role of the nurse and its effectiveness within this multidisciplinary team.</li> <li>8. Reflecting on my development to date and my future learning needs to evaluate my ability to undertake the role of the nurse within the multidisciplinary team.</li> <li>9. Identify my future learning and development needs, with a brief action plan, in order to undertake this role effectively.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I need to access a person who receives care from the multidisciplinary team.</li> <li>2. I need consent from them to undertake this learning.</li> <li>3. I will need access to the multidisciplinary team.</li> <li>4. I will need time to reflect.</li> </ol>	<p>I have completed the Interprofessional worksheet and it evidences these activities and learning.</p>
			<b>Confirmation of Achievement</b>
			Mentor's Signature
			Date

***We have discussed the above Learning Contract and agree that the proposed actions are relevant to the expressed learning needs of the student and the required practice outcomes for this practice learning experience.***

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# ONGOING ACHIEVEMENT RECORD

## What is the Ongoing Achievement Record?

The Ongoing Achievement Record is the vehicle for sharing information regarding student progress in practice learning. This is achieved by maintaining an '*ongoing achievement record*', including comments from mentors which are passed from one experience to the next to enable judgements to be made on the student's progress. This record evidences achievements, progress and concerns which are addressed and where relevant shared with others, including academic staff. **For the purposes of this programme, the student portfolio is the Ongoing Achievement Record.**

Towards the end of your programme students will have a sign-off mentor who must be able to access your ongoing achievement record to inform signing off proficiency, confirming that ongoing competence and any concerns have been addressed since the last progression point. The '*ongoing achievement record*' forms part of the assessment of practice document and needs to be of sufficient detail to enable the sign-off mentor to confirm proficiency at the designated point of the programme. In order for students to proceed through their final (awarding) examinations board, where the recommendation is made to place them on the NMC register, their course director must have their entire Ongoing Achievement Record. **Without this, the examination board cannot process the student through the board.**

As a result, this record is compulsory and must be maintained by the student.

The NMC (2007, p.3)<sup>1</sup> state:

*"... The following applies to all assessed placements but may be interpreted more flexibly for placements of less than four weeks, or for observational experience:*

- *the student and mentor meet together at the end of a placement to document strengths, development needs, and any concerns. The document to be shared with the education provider.*
- *the student to be responsible for carrying the documentation from placement to placement with copies retained by the education provider.*
- *within five days of commencing a placement the documentation to be used by the student and mentor to develop a development plan and set goals*
- *that take account of strengths, issues and concerns raised in previous placements.*
- *regular meetings are scheduled to evaluate progress by student and mentor throughout a placement, (involving academic staff when appropriate) at least at the mid point and at the end of a placement where strengths and any issues for development are addressed.*
- *a specific development plan to address needs and/or concerns can be established at any point and must set out clear timescales for addressing the needs/ concerns*
- *where a specific development plan has been put in place and concerns remain then an evaluation session with the mentor must be urgently scheduled and others involved as appropriate e.g. academic staff.*
- *where there are causes for concern a student representative might also be present."*

**This requires students to produce their Ongoing Achievement Record to their mentor within two days of commencing a placement. The responsibility is on the student to produce it and request its review.**

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<sup>1</sup> NMC 2007. *Ensuring Continuity of Practice Assessment Through the Ongoing Achievement Record (Circular 33/2007)*. London: NMC



## What happens if a student does not maintain an Ongoing Achievement Record?

The mentor for each experience must review the Ongoing Achievement Record at the beginning of each placement. As it is an NMC requirement, students must provide this. If it is identified that a student has not maintained an Ongoing Achievement Record, they will be referred to the course director. This could have implications for progress on practice learning.

When a student reaches their final practice learning experience in Year 3 their sign-off mentor will require a complete Ongoing Achievement Record for all of their practice learning experiences. Without this, the sign-off mentor will not be able to review and verify that they have met the NMC Standards of Proficiency over the three years of the programme, and may not sign the declaration to verify this. In addition, the examination board at the end of your programme cannot process the student through the awarding examinations board without a complete Ongoing Achievement Record.

Throughout your work with people, well or sick, you must conform to **Code Standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives** (NMC, 2008) and the NMC (2011) *Guidance on Professional Conduct for Nursing and Midwifery Students*. As these are updated by the NMC, you are required to follow the most recent version. You have a responsibility to ensure you maintain all of your placement documentation, including placement booklets and care plans, in a safe and professional manner. As this contains signatures and information pertaining to practice areas, this information should only be used for the purposes outlined in this booklet and within the placement booklets. The material should not be circulated to anyone other than those specified.

## Developing and Maintaining the Ongoing Achievement Record

Students will build their Ongoing Achievement Record from the beginning of the programme. This requires students to retain all documentation that has been completed during the course of each practice learning experience in order to produce it for the mentor at the beginning of each new practice learning experience. As previously highlighted, the complete Ongoing Achievement Record is required to be submitted by the end of the programme in order for a student to progress through an awarding examinations board.

## Components of the Ongoing Achievement Record

Each portfolio of each year of the programme makes up the full Ongoing Achievement Record. Each portfolio must have all sections completed and there can be no missing signatures. Please note that all sections of documentation must be completed, they cannot be left blank by student, mentor or link lecturer. Not Applicable (or N/A) should not be used in any section. **The use of correction fluid is not permitted.** The School Office will not accept submission of portfolio material should these principles not be met and the matter will be referred to the relevant academic coordinator and/or course director to resolve with you.

The Ongoing Achievement Record is composed of:

- Records of Discussions (Initial, progress review and final) for each practice learning experience
- Review of Student Development Action Plans
- Formative Assessments
- Summative Assessments
- Two Week Action Plans (if used)
- Evaluation Records (if used)
- Record of Additional Activities
- Skills Development Record.



## MANAGING EACH PRACTICE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

For each practice learning experience, there are a few key steps that need to be taken to identify learning needs, plan to address these, evaluate learning that has taken place, and to record all of this.

### Location of Practice Learning Experiences

Students accept a place on the course on the understanding that they cannot self-select practice learning experiences. Practice learning experiences are predominantly within the Northern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts as determined by the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety. However, some experiences, for example, Learning Disability and Mental Health may require travel outside this zoned region. All experiences used outside the zoned region are provided in consultation with Queen's University, Belfast and the Open University following a process of mapping to ensure that clinical and non-clinical facilities are not exceeding their Student capacity numbers.

**Students are not permitted to secure or alter any practice learning experience. To do so may result in disciplinary action. Allocations may only be secured by the Practice Learning Office.**

Every endeavour is made to place Students as geographically close to their home address. Students with extenuating or special circumstances will be given consideration; however, this does not guarantee allocations close to home. Students should be aware that they are **highly likely** to have to travel to practice learning facilities during their programme.

Applicants who accept a place on the course do so on the condition that they undertake the practice learning experiences allocated to them by the Practice Learning Office within the School of Nursing using the InPlace Website. Students can access their allocations in InPlace, which is available at: [http://www.science.ulster.ac.uk/nursing/placement/practice\\_allocation.php](http://www.science.ulster.ac.uk/nursing/placement/practice_allocation.php). This software works best in Google Chrome and the link provides access to a video tutorial on how to use InPlace. You will automatically be sent log-in details to the system.

Adult Nursing Students will be allocated practice learning experiences that are predominantly within the Northern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts. However, from time to time, Students may also be required to travel outside these areas in order to gain the requisite experience.

Mental Health Students may be allocated practice learning experiences throughout Northern Ireland in order to gain the requisite experience, but this will largely be within the Northern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts.

All practice learning facilities used outside these Trusts are provided in consultation with Queen's University, Belfast and the Open University to ensure that clinical and non-clinical facilities are not exceeding their Student capacity numbers. Allocations may be changed at any point in response to changes in service. This requires students to be vigilant in monitoring their allocations through InPlace.

### Travel to Practice Learning Facilities

As far as possible, staff within the Practice Learning Office will attempt to place the Student as close to their **home address** as is geographically possible. However, this is not always possible due to the number of Pre-Registration Nursing students and limited availability of practice learning experiences. Students should expect to have to travel to meet the requirements of practice learning modules.

Currently, excess travelling expenses incurred to attend practice learning facilities, up to a specific limit, will be reimbursed under the Bursary Office conditions. This is subject to review by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland) on an annual basis.

**Please note that students using their own vehicles to travel to patients' homes in the community are responsible for ensuring they have appropriate insurance cover, normally Class 1 Business Insurance.**

**Students are responsible for ensuring they are aware of the conditions around extra expenses when securing extra accommodation or intending on claiming travel expenses. The details of this are located within the Bursary Booklet provided to you.**

Students should bear in mind that significant periods of time (up to 18 weeks) are spent on practice learning. This may have a bearing on the accommodation you seek while attending on campus for theoretical components of the course. Students who are required to take up additional accommodation for the duration of a placement will be reimbursed providing it falls within certain defined rules and limits. If hospital accommodation is not available only NI Tourist Board Approved Bed and Breakfast / Hotel should be used. Students must provide proof of that hospital accommodation is unavailable when submitting their Student Claim Form for Excess Travel Expenses as the Bursary Unit will not reimburse without this proof. Please see Appendix 2 for the protocol for the submission of these forms.

Students will be provided with a year planner in their induction week to illustrate the structure of the course, indicating when Students are out on practice learning and when they are in class. This is subject to change and students should refer to the Bursary Booklet which is updated annually and made available on the School's web page under Practice Learning Resources.

## **Mitigating Circumstances**

Mitigating circumstances will be considered when allocating practice learning experiences. However, we cannot guarantee that all Students will be within easy travelling distance of their practice learning facility. (Please note that *'having a family'* is not normally considered to be a mitigating circumstance.) **Mitigating circumstances will only be considered when the student has gone through the correct channels for applying for such consideration.**

Students who feel they have mitigating circumstances must meet with their Course Director within the first two weeks of each academic year to discuss the submission of a Mitigating Circumstances form by the Course Director to the Academic Lead for Practice Learning. This must be supported with evidence. The Academic Lead for Practice Learning will manage any submitted mitigation and a decision will be made within the School as to whether it has been accepted. Accepted circumstances are then ranked in order of priority. All documentation pertaining to mitigating circumstances is held in a sealed envelope in your student file in the School Office.

## **Making Reasonable Adjustments**

Some students may have individual needs and personal circumstances that need to be taken into consideration when being allocated and undertaking practice learning, including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities. The School of Nursing has processes and procedures in place to identify and manage such needs formally, which have been developed and agreed between practice learning partners and the School.

## Hours of Duty

When undertaking practice learning, students will be allocated to *either* day *or* night duty on all of the days of the week (including weekends). Each week should involve 37½ hours of practice (or 75 hours over two weeks). These 37½ hours represent contact time with people and in such breaks do not contribute to these. In order to maximise their learning, students need to work with their mentors as closely as possible. All students are expected to undertake night duty. You may only request specific hours of off-duty for very exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of your practice learning manager, mentor and link lecturer. Students **should not** request their off-duty to be planned around any part-time employment they may have.

## Booking Holidays

The year planner identifies what weeks of the year are designated as holiday weeks. **These cannot be altered or reorganised with your Link Lecturer or Mentor. The Practice Learning Office will not make amendments to allocations to accommodate holidays that are booked outside of these designated holiday weeks.**

## AccessNI

All students undergo an AccessNI enhanced disclosure check. This is an NMC requirement and students cannot progress to practice learning without this check being returned to the School of Nursing by AccessNI and reviewed by the Head of School.

Students ***must*** retain their copy of the certificate once it is sent to them by AccessNI. Some practice learning settings require this to be produced to permit your practice learning to go ahead.

**The School do not keep copies of this check once they have been processed (for Data Protection purposes).**

## Practice Learning Experiences Outside the UK

Within semester one, year three, students will have the opportunity to undertake a period of practice learning of not more than four weeks within a practice learning setting outside of the UK. This practice learning experience may include direct care but is not summatively assessed. Such opportunities will be limited to a small number of students and will be subject to risk assessment and identification of which practice learning outcomes will be achieved through this experience. This is to ensure the safety of service users, students and staff and show how the intended programme outcomes are to be addressed. Students will use the same portfolio documentation during this experience.

## Submission of Practice Learning Documentation

Students should follow the principles set out below (Table 1) in preparing practice learning documentation for submission to the School Office. The blue cover sheet should be used to submit practice learning documentation. This must be complete in its entirety before arriving at the School Office to submit.

**Table 1: Documentation to be Submitted**

After Each Practice Learning Experience	After A Tripartite Formative Assessment	
<p>You are required to submit the originals of the following pages (in order) by the Friday (before 12 noon) following the completion of a practice learning experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue coversheet</li> <li>• Health and Safety Induction Checklist</li> <li>• Record of Discussions and Feedback with Mentor:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Practice Learning Plan</li> <li>○ Initial Discussion</li> <li>○ Progress Review (<i>not required for Learning Disability experience for all students and for Mental Health experience for Adult students</i>)</li> <li>○ Final Discussion and Feedback</li> <li>○ Action Plan for Next Practice Learning Experience</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Link Lecturer's Notes (<i>not required for Learning Disability experience for all students and for Mental Health and one-week Treatment Room experience for Adult students</i>)</li> <li>• Record of Practice Learning Attendance</li> <li>• Record of Significant Concerns (<i>if used</i>)</li> <li>• Sign-Off Mentor Weekly Record of Reflection, Feedback and Review of Student Achievement (Final Practice Learning Experience Year 3 only)</li> <li>• Final Assessment of Proficiency (only Year 3 final experience)</li> </ul> <p><b>Please complete a blue cover sheet and staple all documentation together at top left hand corner before submitting.</b></p>	<p>You are required to submit the original of the following page by the Friday (before 12 noon) following the completion of a Formative Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formative Assessment</li> </ul> <p><b>Please complete a blue cover sheet and staple all documentation together at top left hand corner before submitting.</b></p>	
	<th data-bbox="815 551 1513 611">After A Tripartite Summative Assessment</th> <td data-bbox="815 618 1513 1104"> <p>You are required to submit the originals of the following pages (in order) at the same time as the paperwork for your final practice learning experience of the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summative Assessment (First Opportunity)</li> <li>• Two Week Action Plan (if used)</li> <li>• Summative Assessment (Final Opportunity) (if used)</li> </ul> <p><b>Please complete a blue cover sheet and staple all documentation together at top left hand corner before submitting.</b></p> </td>	After A Tripartite Summative Assessment
<p><b>Please see below a summary of your submissions for each year of the course. You must complete and attach a blue coversheet for each individual practice learning experience before submitting.</b></p>		
<p><b>Year 1 (Adult)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice Learning 1</li> <li>• Practice Learning 2 (Mental Health Experience)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 3 (Learning Disability Experience)</li> <li>• Formative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 4</li> <li>• Summative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Year 1 (Mental Health)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice Learning 1</li> <li>• Practice Learning 2 (Public Health Experience)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 3 (Learning Disability Experience)</li> <li>• Formative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 4</li> <li>• Summative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Year 2 (Adult)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice Learning 5 (Public Health Experience)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 6 (Home Nursing Experience)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 7 (Treatment Room Experience)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 8 (Hospital Experience)</li> <li>• Formative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> <li>• Summative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Year 2 (Mental Health)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice Learning 5</li> <li>• Practice Learning 6</li> <li>• Formative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> <li>• Summative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Year 3 (Adult)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice Learning 9</li> <li>• Formative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 10</li> <li>• Practice Learning 11 + Final Assessment of Proficiency (stapled together)</li> <li>• Summative Assessment (blue coversheet required)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Year 3 (Mental Health)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice Learning 8</li> <li>• Formative Assessment (blue cover sheet required)</li> <li>• Practice Learning 9 + Final Assessment of Proficiency (stapled together)</li> <li>• Summative Assessment (blue coversheet required)</li> </ul>	

Please be aware that administrative staff have been requested to only accept practice learning documentation with the completed blue cover sheet attached and with all aspects of the documentation completed in full. Please do not ask administrative staff to deviate from protocols set by the School. Instead, ensure all paperwork is completed before you leave your practice learning environment. Should there be any difficulties with submitting work in the required format, please approach your Course Director or relevant Academic Lead to resolve any issues.

## **Record of Practice Learning Attendance**

Students must complete the Record of Practice Learning Attendance on a weekly basis and ensure it is authenticated by their mentor or the manager in the practice learning environment. This record must be submitted in its completed format to the relevant School Office at the end of the practice learning experience. This must be submitted in order for the student's practice learning hours to be recognised as completed. Should students not submit this record, they will not be able to proceed through the next progression point.

Please note that changing a student's allocated off-duty as a result of sickness/absence must be recorded as sickness/absence.

## **Health and Safety Checklist**

The Health and Safety Checklist is a mandatory University requirement to ensure that students are inducted appropriately to health and safety measures. This should be completed by the student on commencing each practice learning experience and returned to the Practice Learning Office within two weeks.

## **Management of Notes Made at Handovers**

Students will undertake practice learning in areas where they will need to take notes at handovers, and at other times, in order to guide their work during that shift/day. Any notes taken by students are likely to contain information that is confidential and students must dispose of such notes in a manner that does not breach confidentiality and is in keeping with the Data Protection Act.

Students are asked to do the following when undertaking practice learning:

1. Make yourself aware of the organisation's policy on taking and disposing of notes.
2. Follow this guidance, seeking advice when you are unsure.
3. Ensure that no note you make leaves the practice environment with you and that it is disposed of as per the organisation's policy. In the absence of a policy, please seek guidance and note that any note should normally be shredded or placed into appropriate confidential waste bins prior to ending your shift.
4. Ensure that you retain any notes safely during the period of a shift so that they are not obtained by any other person (eg dropped on floor and picked up by a member of the public).

## RECORD OF PRACTICE LEARNING ATTENDANCE

Name of Student: ..... Student ID No: ..... Name of Mentor: .....

Location of Experience: ..... Dates of Experience: ..... No. of Weeks: .....

Key: **A** = Attended as Scheduled    **S** – Sickness/Absence    **T** = Time Made Up for Sickness/Absence    **M** = Worked with Mentor

	Week No.: Dates:	Week No.: Dates:	Week No.: Dates:	Week No.: Dates:	Week No.: Dates:		
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<b>Hrs Worked</b>							
<b>Hrs Sick/Absent</b>							
<b>Hrs Made-Up</b>							
<b>Mentor Signature</b>							
<b>Date</b>							

PLEASE SUBMIT THE ORIGINAL OF THIS PAGE TO YOUR SCHOOL OF NURSING OFFICE AND MAINTAIN A COPY IN THIS PORTFOLIO AS YOUR RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY STUDENT INDUCTION CHECKLIST PRACTICE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Name of Practice Learning Facility \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Health and Safety are paramount during practice learning.

The original of the completed checklist and statement **MUST** be returned to the Practice Learning Office on completion of your experience along with the relevant practice learning documentation.

If for any reason you feel unable to sign this declaration you should contact your Link lecturer immediately.

The following items are commonly included in induction into organisations. It may be useful for you to check off the items when they occur. Inform the person in charge of your practice learning facility within the organisation if any obviously relevant items are not covered within one week of the start of the practice learning period.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES	
Emergency procedures	
Location of first aid box/first aid provision	
Fire procedures and location of fire management equipment	
Accident/incident reporting procedures	
Moving and handling procedures	
Policies and procedures, including health and safety (received or location)	
Personal protective equipment	
Instruction on equipment you will be required to use	
Any relevant risk assessments have been drawn to your attention	

I confirm that I have no current concerns relating to any health and safety issues associated with this practice learning facility. In the event of concerns arising during or in connection with this or subsequent practice learning experiences, I will inform the practice learning facility manager, mentor and Link lecturer immediately.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please retain a photocopy of this completed form and return the original to:**

*Practice Learning Office  
School of Nursing  
Ulster University at Magee  
Northland Road  
Londonderry  
BT48 7JL*

## MENTOR DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Practice learning providers and Universities are committed to developing and enhancing support mechanisms within practice learning environments. This requires development programmes and processes to be in place to train new mentors/practice teachers and enhance the skills of existing mentors to become sign-off mentors. These programmes/processes are put in place in line with Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) requirements.

During a student's practice learning experience they may be directly supported by two identified people:

1. A mentor/sign-off mentor/practice teacher
2. A trainee mentor/mentor progressing to be a sign-off mentor/practice teacher student

This may require both of these individuals to be part of the student's support, supervision and assessment throughout the period of practice learning and as such may contribute to their assessment. A student should document their agreement to this process in their portfolio with the mentor/sign-off mentor/practice teacher. Should a student have an objection to a trainee/developing mentor/practice teacher having a role in their support, supervision and assessment, they should discuss this with their Link lecturer at the earliest opportunity.

# ROLES

## Role of the Student

### *Health and safety*

- Students are required to follow the Uniform Policy issued by the School.
- Students must complete the Health and Safety/Orientation checklist at the beginning of each new practice learning experience and return it to the Practice Learning Office within the first two weeks. Students must also ensure that they are properly orientated to the practice learning setting in relation to roles and responsibilities of team members and emergency procedures on their first shift of duty as appropriate.

### *Managing practice learning*

- Students must provide their portfolio and Ongoing Achievement Record to a mentor/sign-off mentor within the first two days of practice learning. They must maintain this portfolio for the duration of the programme.
- Students are responsible for ensuring that all necessary parts of the portfolio for practice learning are completed appropriately.
- By the end of the first week of each practice learning experience the student should meet with a mentor/sign-off mentor to discuss learning outcomes. They should identify together the experiences needed to meet the outcomes.
- Students should review their progress in meeting their learning outcomes on an ongoing basis with a mentor/sign-off mentor and the Link lecturer.
- Following completion of the portfolio, students must submit it with all sections and signatures completed to the relevant School of Nursing Office as per the guidance within the portfolio. Until this is done, practice learning is incomplete.
- Students must make arrangements to meet with their Advisor of Studies within the first two weeks of a theory block once they have returned from a block of practice learning. At this meeting, they should present their portfolio in its completed format to date for review and advice.
- Students should be aware that documentation compiled as part of the portfolio must be stored safely and can be requested for inspection by the Course Director / Academic Coordinator for Practice learning at any time.

### *Professional performance*

- Throughout their work with people, well or sick, students are required to follow the NMC (2011) *Guidance on Professional Conduct for Nursing and Midwifery Students*.
- Students are required to follow NMC guidelines on confidentiality:
  - i. Should a student acquire information that they deem should be passed on to a professional they should obtain the person's permission to do so. Circumstances may arise, e.g. suspected abuse, where safety considerations may outweigh the duty of confidentiality.

- ii. Real names and addresses must not be used in coursework material. Students must not include any information in their coursework that links with a practice learning facility or person.
- Students have a responsibility to ensure they maintain all portfolio documentation in a safe and professional manner. As this contains signatures and information pertaining to practice areas, this information should only be used for the purposes outlined. The material should not be circulated to anyone other than those specified. If a student misplaces their portfolio, they should inform the Practice Learning Office immediately.
- If students have concerns with any aspect of their practice learning experience, they must raise these issues as soon as possible with the following people in this order; a mentor, practice learning facility manager, link lecturer, Academic Lead for Practice Learning, or a member of the Practice Education Team (within Health and Social Care Trusts).
- Bullying and Harassment in any form is unacceptable behaviour and will not be permitted or condoned. Sexual, sectarian and racial harassment and harassment on the grounds of disability or sexual orientation constitute discrimination and are unlawful under the sex discrimination, fair employment, race relations, disability, sexual orientation and age legislation. Harassment is also a criminal offence under the Protection from Harassment (NI) Order 1997 and it may contravene the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 (see Ulster University's Policy and Procedures on Dealing with Bullying and Harassment (Dignity at Work) (April 2010).
- Students must familiarise themselves with and adhere to policies and procedures of the School of Nursing and the organisation where they are undertaking practice learning.

### ***Practice learning attendance***

Students have '*supernumerary status*' throughout the programme. Supernumerary means that they "will not, as part of their programme of preparation, be contracted by any person or body to provide nursing care" (NMC, 2010, pg65). Therefore, students are not counted in the staffing numbers within the practice learning facility/area.

- Students must maintain an accurate record of duty/attendance within the Portfolio and the practice learning facility off-duty (where available). This is to ensure there is an accurate record that the student has met the required number of hours set by the NMC.
- Students will undertake practice learning experiences across all days of the week (including weekends) over the full 24 hours in the same manner that a Registered Nurse would. This includes 12 hour shifts (unless a reasonable adjustment has been formally agreed that indicates otherwise). Hours on duty do not include breaks. These principles will maximise contact with a mentor/sign-off mentor.
- Students should not make requests for specific off-duty except on the occasion of a special event. This includes requests for their off-duty to be set to permit them to undertake paid employment elsewhere. Any requests should be discussed with a mentor/sign-off mentor and link lecturer for agreement prior to the request being made to the manager of the practice learning facility.
- **Students must inform the practice learning facility and the School of Nursing Practice Learning Office of any absence before the time they are expected on duty. This must also be recorded within the Portfolio in the attendance records, regardless of whether the time has been made up. Students will continue to be marked absent until they inform Practice Learning Office that they have returned to practice learning.**

## **Role of the Mentor**

Students on NMC approved pre-registration nursing education programmes, leading to registration on the nurses' part of the register, must be supported and assessed by mentors/sign-off mentors.

Mentors/sign-off mentors who are assessing competence must have met the NMC competencies and outcomes as defined in the Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice (NMC, 2008).

The role and responsibilities of the mentor/sign-off mentors are as follows:

### ***Promoting effective learning***

- Organise and co-ordinate student learning activities in practice.
- Supervise students in learning situations and provide them with constructive feedback on their achievements.
- Set and monitor achievement of realistic learning objectives which are aligned with the curriculum of the programme which the Student is undertaking.
- Liaise with others to provide feedback, identify any concerns about the student's performance and agree action as appropriate.
- Support learning in an interprofessional environment, selecting and supporting a range of learning opportunities for students from other professions.

### ***Quality assurance***

- Support other nurses and other health care professionals (as appropriate) in developing their role in supporting students.
- Ensure that, whilst giving direct care in the practice setting, at least 40% of a student's time must be supervised (directly or indirectly) by a mentor/sign-off mentor. Sign-off mentors must have time allocated to reflect, give feedback and keep records of student achievements in their final period of practice learning. This will be the equivalent of an hour per student per week. This time is in addition to the 40% of the student's time to be supervised by a mentor.
- Use their professional judgment and local/national policy to determine where activities may be safely delegated to students and the level of supervision required.
- Be accountable for their decisions and for ensuring public protection.
- Must not keep their own separate student progress records; everything should be recorded in the assessment of practice document (ie portfolio).
- Have a working knowledge of current programme requirements, practice assessment strategies and relevant changes in education and practice for the student they are assessing.
- Maintain and develop their knowledge, skills and competence as a mentor through regular updating, in line with the Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice (NMC, 2008).
- Sign-off mentors must have an understanding of the NMC registration requirements and the contribution they make to the achievement of these requirements.

## **Assessment**

- Assess total student performance, including skills, attitudes and behaviours.
- Provide evidence as required by programme providers of student achievement or lack of achievement.
- Provide evidence for, or acting as, sign-off mentors with regard to making decisions about achievement of proficiency at the end of a programme.
- Be able to make judgements about competence/proficiency of NMC students on the same part of the register, and in the same field of practice, and be accountable for such decisions.
- Undertake assessments in practice along with students, link lecturers and others as appropriate in order to maximise interrater reliability and accuracy.
- Agree alternative arrangements with link lecturer and student if all three parties will not be present at the assessment; advise others of same as appropriate.
- Sign-off mentors must have clinical currency and capability in the field in which the student is being assessed for entry to the NMC register.
- Sign-off mentors must have an in-depth understanding of their accountability to the NMC for the decision they must make to pass or fail a student when assessing proficiency requirements at the end of a programme.

## **Evaluation**

- Feedback to Nurse Manager (Sister/Charge Nurse/Team Leader), link lecturer, and Practice Education Team (Health and Social Care Trusts) as appropriate of any issues concerning students.
- Collaborate with the link lecturer and the Practice Education Team or manager for the practice learning facility regarding issues which may impact on students' learning experiences or performance, including feedback questionnaires.
- Complete evaluation questionnaires at the end of a student's practice learning experience.

## **Role of the Link Lecturer**

The School operates a link lecturer system with an identified member of staff allocated to each practice learning facility. Link lecturers are allocated through discussion and agreement with the Academic Lead for Practice Learning and/or Head of School, taking into account the link lecturer's knowledge, skills, interests, professional background and resources within the School.

The role and responsibilities of the link lecturer are as follows:

### ***Promoting effective learning***

- Clarify the learning outcomes and their achievement for student, mentor/sign-off mentor and others, as required.
- Maintain accurate and appropriate records as required.
- Monitor student's progress, development and achievement of learning outcomes.
- Recognising that practice learning experiences vary from student to student, the link lecturer will support and advise mentors/sign-off mentors and student in ensuring that necessary measures are taken to make effective use of the learning potential in the practice learning setting, which may include teaching in the practice learning setting (as appropriate).

### ***Quality assurance***

- Assure quality practice learning experiences through educational audit and monitoring of the quality of the learning environment in collaboration with practice partners.
- Be available to support and advise students and mentors/sign-off mentors in relation to challenges to student learning within the practice learning setting.
- Contribute to mentor/sign-off mentor updating processes in response to quality assurance and enhancement issues relevant to the provision of the programme.
- Visit the practice learning environment to assure, in collaboration with practice partners, that Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice (SLAiP) (NMC, 2008) are being met.
- Ensure resource files are maintained and updated as necessary in collaboration with practice partners.

### ***Assessment***

- Contribute to assessments in practice along with students, mentors/sign-off mentors and other appropriately prepared persons as appropriate in order to maximise interrater reliability and accuracy.
- Agree alternative arrangements with students and mentors/sign-off mentors if all three parties will not be present at the assessment; advise others of same as appropriate.
- Forward the outcome of summative assessments to the appropriate member of School Staff in a timely manner.

## ***Evaluation***

- Advise the Course Director and/or Academic Lead for Practice Learning as appropriate of any successes as well as issues concerning students.
- Collaborate with the Academic Lead for Practice Learning and the Practice Education Team or manager for the practice learning facility regarding issues which may impact on students' learning experiences or performance, including feedback questionnaires.
- Encourage students and mentors/sign-off mentors to complete evaluation questionnaires.



# UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE POLICY

As an Ulster University Nursing student on practice learning you are required to dress in a manner which is likely to inspire public confidence. Therefore, please ensure that you adhere to the following policy and behave in a professional manner at all times. Link lecturers should follow the general principles and those principles relating to non-uniform clothing.

## General

- Students are required to wear their name badge at all times except where the practice learning provider has a policy stating otherwise.
- Wearing jewellery including rings, earrings and body jewellery is not permitted as this poses a health and safety risk to yourself and the people in your care. Students must check the policy in each practice learning environment, which normally permits a wedding ring and stud earrings to be worn.
- Finger nails should be short and clean, false nails or nail varnish is not permitted.
- All Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs) premises have a strict no smoking policy. Students are required to follow the organisation's policy on smoking.

## Uniform

- For most experiences you are required to wear the University of Ulster uniform. This is a white tunic with blue trim, navy (uniform) trousers and navy or black shoes (not trainers) and socks. Shoes must be '*closed in*' and safe for moving and handling of people and equipment.
- You should where possible change into and out of uniform at the workplace. Where practice learning facilities have appropriate changing facilities these should be used.
- Students who are permitted to wear a uniform for experience outside hospital should ensure the tunic is covered completely when travelling.
- Students should not be coming from practice learning facilities to the University in their uniform.
- Students should not go shopping, socialising or undertake other activities not related to practice learning in uniform.
- Students must change as soon as is practical if uniform or clothes become visibly soiled or contaminated with blood or body fluids.
- When in uniform hair should be worn above the collar. Long hair must be secured.
- A clean uniform should be worn for each shift.

## Dress Code for when uniforms are not worn

In the instance that students are undertaking a practice learning experience where they have been advised by the staff/mentor in that setting not to wear a uniform, the following principles must be followed:

- Smart, moderate, clean laundered, clothing safe for moving and handling of people and equipment should be worn
- Denim (of all colours), shorts, baseball caps, ripped style or clothing with overt slogans which may be perceived as offensive are not permissible (ie clothing should be as plain as possible).
- Midriff, thigh and shoulder should not be on show and no underwear should be visible.
- Navy or black shoes and socks must be worn. Shoes should be closed in smart, clean, well maintained and have an appropriate professional appearance and safe for moving and handling of people and equipment.

## Laundering Your Uniform

- Uniforms must be carried separately from other items – clean and dirty uniforms must not be transported together.
- Hand washing uniform is ineffective and unacceptable.
- Wash separate from other items, in a washing machine.
- Wash in laundry detergent in the quantities advised by the manufacturer.
- Dry quickly, or tumble dry, and iron.
- Store in a plastic bag, to prevent contamination with dust or other pollutants.

The company who manufacture the uniform advise:

- Polo shirt – wash at 40<sup>0</sup> C, do not dry clean, do not use chlorine bleach, tumble dry low heat, wash with like colours.
- Jacket – wash at 30<sup>0</sup> C, do not iron, wash inside out, close all fasteners, wash separately.
- Tunics – wash at 60<sup>0</sup> C, can be washed up to 85<sup>0</sup> C, do not use chlorine bleach, we would recommend this garment is washed inside out with like colours.
- Trousers – wash at 60<sup>0</sup> C, can be washed up to 85<sup>0</sup> C, do not use chlorine bleach, we would recommend this garment is washed inside out with like colours.
- Do not use powders with optical brighteners as this will affect colour.

## Etiquette

Students are expected to follow the NMC *Guidance on Professional Conduct for Nursing and Midwifery Students* (2011). This includes issues surrounding consent, use of social network sites, and good health and good character.

## Use of Mobile Phones

If you carry a mobile phone or other wireless communication device **you must turn it off** while in practice learning settings. The mentor and manager may grant exceptions to this on a one off basis where a student needs to receive an urgent message. This must be by prior arrangement. Electronic devices, including phones with cameras are not permitted to be switched on in any practice learning setting.

## KEY POINTS OF CLARIFICATION

The following key points of clarification are as a result of students seeking this information. They may prove beneficial in understanding your portfolio.

### 1. Practice Learning Outcomes

Only learning outcomes that have all the evidence collated can be considered achieved, ie a practice outcome cannot be considered achieved until all the evidence that is required is present.

### 2. Learning Contracts

A learning contract is a tool to structure learning and achievement. A mentor signature on a learning contract is an agreement to support that learning contract. Learning contracts cannot substitute evidence needed for practice learning outcomes. Learning contracts should be used if you have missed any skills sessions in the university. Learning contracts should be completed if advised by link lecturer / mentor.

### 3. Final Discussion and Action Plan for Next Experience

At the end of the Final Discussion the student and mentor are to evaluate development over the experience, identifying strengths and areas for development within the context of person-centred nursing. It would be unusual for a student not to have areas for development, and these areas for development should translate over onto the action plan for the next experience.

### 4. Formative Assessment and Feedback (Tripartite)

This can occur around week 33. There is no problem with this being a week or two earlier or later. If a student is undertaking an experience where there is no mentor (ie they have a supervisor), then the Formative Assessment can be delayed until the next opportunity when they are with a mentor. During the Formative Assessment, the evidence collated to date for outcomes claimed to be achieved (record on Summary Record of Practice Learning Experiences and Achievement for Progression Point 1 (see 1 above)) should be checked to ensure it is sufficient to evidence the outcome. Additionally, student's progress in achieving skills is to be checked, bearing in mind that some students may have missed some skills classes.

### 5. Summative Assessment and Feedback (Tripartite)

For Year 1 this happens in week 43 (first opportunity) and 45 (final opportunity). For Year 2 this happens in week 47 (first opportunity) and 48 (final opportunity). For Year 3 this happens in week 47 (first opportunity) and 49 (final opportunity). Students must have all of the evidence listed for each practice learning outcome in order to achieve all outcomes. Evidence must be in hard copy and anonymised. Skills are the only form of evidence that only need a signature, and all skills must be achieved. If a worksheet is completed correctly, it only has to be completed once – eg Health and Wellbeing worksheet may be listed against a number of practice learning outcomes, but it only has to be done once to cover all of those outcomes.

### 6. Record of Significant Concerns

This only is completed when there are significant issues. It is not to be completed otherwise (eg do not submit to the School Office with not applicable on them when it is not needed).

### 7. Authenticated Reflective Accounts

Students must have sufficient reflections to address the specified practice learning outcomes. The number of reflections is entirely dependent on the nature of what is being reflected upon, some students may address them in three reflections, others in six etc. Students were guided towards the suggested model to use in the handbook, or use another model that works for them, but that a reflection should demonstrate its impact on their development. Reflections are required to be authenticated by the mentor and it is essential to indicate which outcomes are being addressed in that reflection.

## 8. Care Documentation

Students must have sufficient examples of care documentation they have completed to address the specified practice learning outcomes. The amount of this evidence is entirely dependent on what is being used. It is essential that students do not submit any actual practice documentation to ensure that confidentiality of the people involved is maintained. All care documentation has to be authenticated by the mentor, using the Evidence Summary Record sheet, which also records which outcome is being addressed by that piece of evidence (a separate Evidence Summary Record sheet for each piece of evidence).

## 9. Record of Additional Activities

This can be used to record how certain outcomes have been met or to record experiences that could not be anticipated in the portfolio. For example, Mental Health Year 1 students have three specific outcomes to address using this, which they must do when on their Public Health Experience. Otherwise the record should be used when identified as required evidence against a practice learning outcome, or to record additional experience to strengthen the evidence for a practice learning outcome.

## 10. Practice Learning Worksheets

These are to be completed once and on the correct template, following the directions provided. For Year 1 students:

- Health and Wellbeing – Adult students to complete at any time, Mental Health students when undertaking Public Health
- Mental Health – Adult students to complete on their Mental Health experience, Mental Health students during any Mental Health experience this year.
- Learning Disability – to be completed by both fields during their two week Learning Disability Experience
- Children's Nursing – To be completed by Mental Health students during their Public Health experience and by Adult Students at any opportunity
- Interprofessional Learning – To be completed at any time.

## 11. Service User and Carer/Family Evaluation Record

Two of these at the sufficient standard is the minimum requirement. Spreading these across the year will demonstrate the standard being maintained and there is no problem with having more than two to strengthen evidence.

## 12. Link Lecturer's Notes

This should have a record entered on every occasion that a Link Lecturer visits. Students are reminded that they must have their portfolios with them at all times. Link Lecturer notes must be submitted whether completed or not and a separate one each practice learning experience.

## 13. Skills Development Record

Each skill must be assessed on each experience and that all skills must be achieved by the Summative Assessment in order to meet Progression Point criteria. Students were reminded that:

**Yes:** Student demonstrates they can practice this skill to the expected standard

Should a mentor indicate Yes for any skill, they are verifying that the student has performed this skill to the required standard. This means that at that point in time the student achieved the skill. However, the student is expected to retain that standard and should be reassessed on this skill during other practice learning experience where the opportunity exists to do so, either directly in that practice learning environment, through accessing the opportunity elsewhere through arrangement with the mentor, or undertaking the skill by simulation with the mentor.

**No:** Student does not yet demonstrate they can practice this skill to the expected standard

Should a mentor indicate No for any skill, they are verifying that the student has performed the skill but not to the required standard. No should not be indicated if the student did not have the opportunity to undertake the skill either through accessing it (with facilitation by the mentor) in another practice learning setting, or through simulation with the mentor.

If a student is scored with a No, an action plan should be created to develop that skill either within that practice learning experience or in the next practice learning experience (where another practice learning experience exists prior to the summative assessment).

Should a No remain against a skill for all practice learning experiences by the time of the first opportunity for the summative assessment, the student will not meet the standard for that progression point, unless the skill has been identified as optional. The student will have a two week period within which to achieve this skill and this should be documented in the two week action plan. Should the skill still not be achieved by the final opportunity summative assessment, the student will not meet the standard to proceed through the progression point, unless the skill has been identified as optional.

**S.** Skill achieved by simulation.

**ONA:** The opportunity to put this skill into practice was not available during this practice learning experience.

Before a mentor selects this category for skill achievement, they must have ensured that an opportunity to gain the skill either directly in the practice learning area or through identifying an opportunity to gain the skill in an area associated with that practice learning area (eg arranging for a student to attend theatre from a surgical ward, endoscopy suite from a medical ward) or through simulating the skill (for example, CPR). Selecting ONA for a skill means that a student has not been assessed in their ability to undertake this skill. ONA cannot be recorded against a skill for every practice learning experience in that year, the student must be afforded the opportunity to achieve the skill before the final opportunity for the summative assessment, unless the skill has been identified as optional.

ONA may be used when a student is undertaking a two week experience with a supervisor who is not able to assess that skill. ONA can also be used in semester one for skills not yet taught. In semester two and three, it cannot be used for this reason.

#### **14. Practice Learning Outcomes for Progression Point 1**

All the Required Sources of Evidence are compulsory to have and additional evidence can strengthen the claim that the practice outcome has been achieved. Students may have achieved some of the evidence for a practice learning outcome on one practice learning experience but they cannot claim that they have achieved the outcome until all the evidence for that outcome has been provided. They therefore keep the evidence they have collated and add the missing pieces during their subsequent experiences.

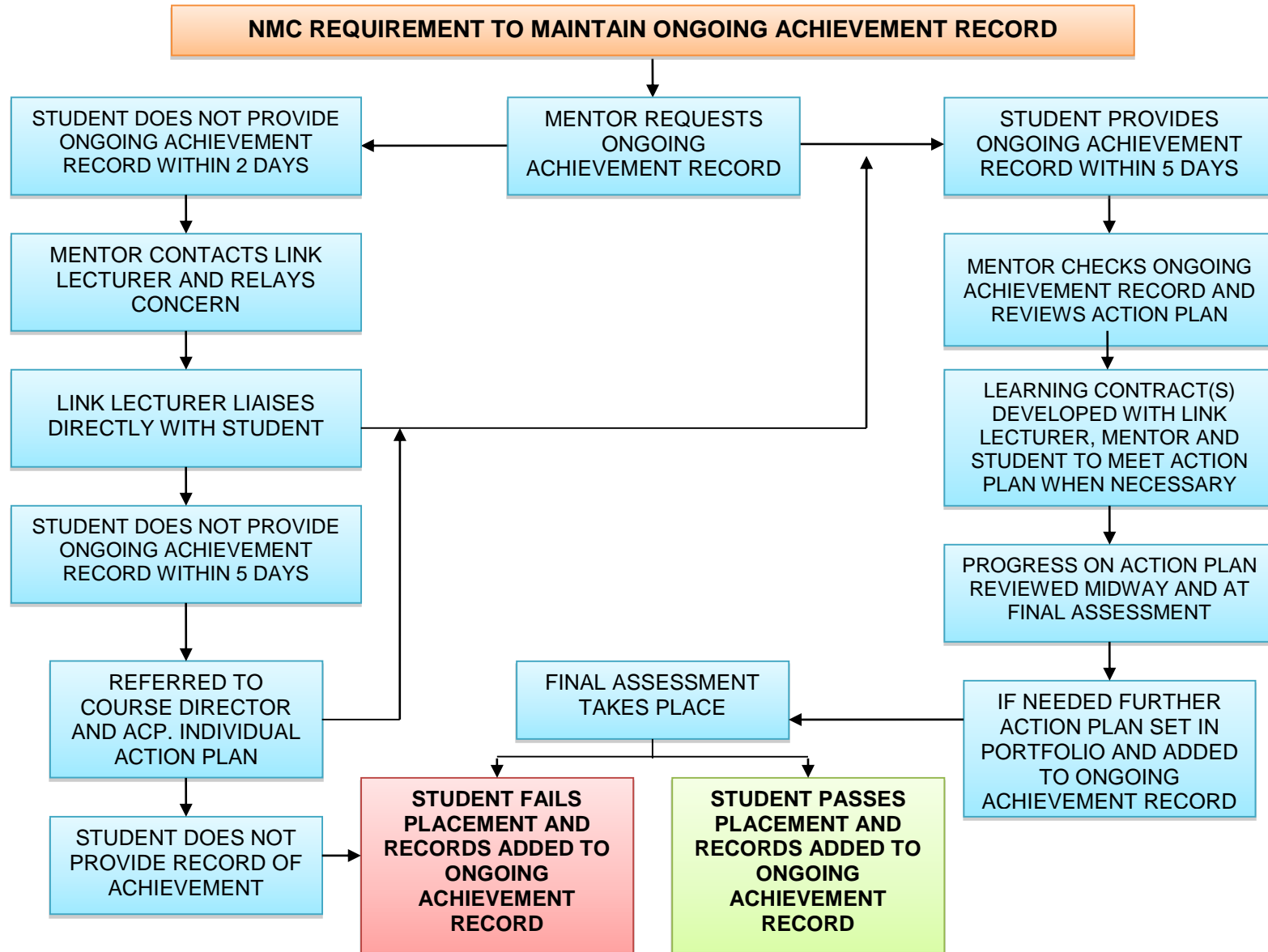
#### **15. Record of Practice Learning Attendance**

This should indicate that all of the hours identified for that experience have been achieved. Hours for each shift must be recorded and all totals columns completed. Students must also record their attendance on the InPlace system.

#### **16. Health and Safety Student Induction Checklist**

This is required to be submitted within two weeks of commencing the experience and should be the correct one for each experience (named at the top).

**Appendix 1: Ongoing Achievement Record Management Flow Chart**



## PROTOCOL FOR THE SUBMISSION OF STUDENT CLAIM FORM FOR EXCESS TRAVEL EXPENSES

1. Excess travel and/or accommodation expenses may be refunded under the Bursary Administration Unit conditions. For full information on what you are eligible to claim for, please refer to the guidance on support for students entitled *Guidance on Support for Students Undergoing Full Time Pre-Registration Nursing Education in Northern Ireland*. This was provided to all students on induction and is available at:  
  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/276460/nhs\\_bursary\\_scheme\\_new\\_rules\\_ed3.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/276460/nhs_bursary_scheme_new_rules_ed3.pdf)
2. Student Claim Form for Excess Travel Expenses is available from the School of Nursing Office.
3. On completion of a practice learning experience students should submit their completed Student Claim Form for Excess Travel Expenses to the Practice Learning Office on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. All receipts must be enclosed in an envelope and stapled to the form.

**Please note that the Bursary Administration Unit will not accept any Claims submitted six months after the completion of the experience.**

4. These are checked and signed off by the Executive Assistant for Practice Learning to confirm that you were on practice learning in the area specified by you on the form.
5. Only two designated signatures can sign these forms off – the Executive for Practice Learning and the Academic Lead for Practice Learning. If you ask another member of staff to sign this form, it will be rejected by the Bursary Administration Unit.
6. Once certified by the Practice Learning Office, your form is sent to the Bursary Administration Unit every month.
7. The Bursary Administration Unit will return forms to students if they are not completed correctly.
8. Once the forms are received by the Bursary Administration Unit they are processed within their own mechanisms.
9. Payment could take up to six weeks from submitting the form to the Practice Learning Office.