University of ULSTER

SCHOOL OF NURSING

SUPPORT GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING STUDENT OFF-DUTY

These points are intended to support the existing information you have on student off-duty. Please note the students are supernumerary in status, and should work a minimum of 40% of their time with their mentor who must also be on the live mentor register. Sign-off mentors should allocate at least one hour per student a week in addition to this 40% to reflect, give feedback and keep records of student achievement. The following should guide the provision of off-duty by the clinical manager to the student:

- Students may work 12 hour shifts if these shifts are worked by the mentor, keeping in mind that they may wish to work shorter shifts in keeping with Working Time Regulations and EU directives.
- Students do not have a minimum number of weekends that they can work. They should work the same number of weekends as their mentors. If their mentor does not work weekends, then the students should work the same off-duty as their mentor, or a reasonable number of weekends when their mentor is not on duty, for example at times of annual leave.
- Students must also work night duty if their mentors are rotated onto night duty. Additionally, when mentors are on annual leave, students must only work a reasonable number of nights, i.e. that which would be expected of a staff nurse.
- Students must work 35 hours contact time with patients a week. This is not at the students' discretion. Students who miss days or hours must make these hours up. When an exam has to be taken during a clinical placement period, students are only required to work 30 hours that week regardless of the number of exams. This applies to the first attempt at an examination only and not second attempts.
- Students who are on part-time course may have reduced clinical placement hours due to taking theoretical work at the same time. The number of hours can vary but will not be more than 35 hours a week. Part-time students will advise the placement area of these hours prior to commencing placement.
- Students are expected to work the same off-duty as their mentors on a weekly basis and any changes to the off duty can only be made with the clinical manager's permission only. Students must have an acceptable reason for such changes.
- At certain times, students will have extenuating circumstances which may need to be taken into consideration. These should be discussed with the clinical manager and Link Lecturer and satisfactory agreement reached by all.
- Some students may have part-time jobs. These should not interfere with the requirements of placement and as such should not impact on the provision of off-duty by the clinical manager.