



Practice Education Handbook (Nursing Associate)

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1.0 Placement Learning

This handbook and guidance is to help you understand and put into practice strategies that will help you to be successful in achieving the required competencies in the placement settings to enable you to register with the NMC.

To achieve this it is recognised that as students you are central to achieving and getting the most out of your practice learning. The NMC state that 'Students should be empowered to take control of and responsibility for their own learning, and to self-direct their learning if safe and appropriate' (NMC, 2019). You can therefore expect to be provided with opportunities to develop your own practice and to work towards becoming an independent, reflective and professional practitioner. This will entail learning to provide care across a range of different clinical environments that will enable you to meet your learning outcomes and experience a variety of healthcare situations. In line with your programme requirements, the practice learning environments should include a mix of acute and community. This can also include 'non-traditional settings' such as prison wards, or working with the armed forces.

2.0 Student expectations, rights and responsibilities on clinical placement

2.1 Professional requirements for practice placements

The amount of time that you spend in practice has been specified by the professional statutory body, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), and your programme has been designed to ensure you meet these requirements. If you are undertaking the Registered Nurse Degree Programme you will be required to complete 2,300 placement hours over three years as follows:

Year 1 – 675 clinical hours

Year 2 – 750 clinical hours

Year 3 – 875 clinical hours

The amount of time that you spend in practice has been specified by the professional statutory body, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), and your programme has been designed to ensure you meet these requirements. If you are undertaking the Registered Nursing Associate Programme you will be required to complete 1,350 placement hours over two years as follows

Year 1 – 725 clinical hours

Year 2 – 725 clinical hours

Another requirement is that during your practice placement experiences, you must have experience of the 24-hour care of patients as well as of the full range of care over a seven day week. This means that in each part of your programme you will be expected to work morning, evening, night and weekend shifts, and the specifics are detailed below.

2.2 Placement attendance for Learning in practice

The Department of Clinical Sciences and its placement partners work collaboratively to provide you with the best possible practice placement experiences and your shift times will be designed to facilitate these. During your practice placement you will be supervised by members of staff who have been trained to do so and you will be given their name when you first start your placement.

We are conscious that many of our students have family responsibilities and we will do our best to support you to meet these. However, we make the assumption that your priority is to become a registered nursing associate or nurse and that you have made the necessary arrangements for adequate support so that you can be punctual and reliable in your attendance at your practice placements.

During your Placement Shifts you will:

- Receive constant supervision and support from named, suitably qualified and experienced practitioners on each of your practice placement shifts.
- Work over the 24 hour, seven day a week range of shifts
- Participate in the delivery and management of care provided to patients/clients in the placement setting.
- Ensure that you have sufficient exposure to the normal every-day care of patients/clients to meet the learning outcomes of your placement.
- Ensure that you complete the prescribed number of hours for your placement during your placement allocation.
- Ensure that your Practice Hours record is accurate and is signed by a registered nurse or nursing associate by the last date of your placement and that this is submitted with your England Nursing Associate Practice Assessment Document (ENAPAD) or Practice Learning Practice Assessment Document (PLPAD).

Exceptional Circumstances

- If in an exceptional circumstance you have specific difficulties about attending a specific shift, you may be able to negotiate some flexibility providing you meet the practice hours required for each the placement experience and:
- The change of shift (time) has been agreed with your Practice Supervisor (PS) or Practice Assessor (PA).
- You adhere to this agreement.

Public / Bank Holidays

- When you are on your NMC assessed placement your are not required to work on a Public Holiday (Bank Holiday).

2.3 Support from the right people

Within all learning environments you should be provided with the right support to help you complete your programme of study. This includes access to the right people to help you meet your learning outcomes. Who the right people are will depend on a number of different factors, including the type of environment, your programme outcomes, your individual needs, and what skills or competencies are being taught. All students must be supervised in practice learning. As students you must also have the opportunity to learn from a wide range of people. This includes all registered nurses, nursing associates and registered allied health professionals in a practice environment, regardless of whether they are acting as a practice supervisor (see 3.0).

2.4 Supernumerary Status and Protected Learning Time

As students in practice or work-placed learning you must be supported to learn and practise skills safely.

It is not expected that Trainee Nursing Associate will be supernumerary while learning in practice, although this may be the case particularly in an external (alternative) placement. In all placements in all settings Trainee Nursing Associate must have 'protected learning time'. The decision about how this is provided is agreed with Brunel University and our practice learning partners in line with the options set out in the programme standards for nursing associates. Protected learning time is an essential feature of your apprenticeship and therefore must take part in your employed role and also in external (alternative) placements. Hours which are clearly not protected from learning, that is when you are working, do not count towards programme hours. Your employer will provide a range of external (alternative) practice placements which have been planned and organised in conjunction with the Brunel University Placement Officer. External (alternative) placements occur throughout the two-year programme and count towards your protected learning time. Please see Part B within the Practice Assessment Document for the protected learning record, this will enable you to record any hours which have been protected for learning during the programme. These hours are recorded by you and closely monitored by Brunel University academic staff in order to support safe and effective learning in practice.

As a Trainee Nursing Associate you will receive on the job learning experiences to allow you to complete the apprenticeship and achieve the 'Standards of proficiency for nursing associates,' (NMC, 2018).

You will receive supervision from the practice supervisor and practice assessor and these practice staff will facilitate protected learning time, here are some examples of how:

- Providing and facilitating opportunities for you to practice skills
- Coaching Sessions
- Shadowing colleagues
- Visiting other departments
- Conferences/workshops
- Team training/In-house Training
- Role play & Simulation Exercises
- E-portfolio & Reflective Journal & Independent Research

3.0 Supervision and assessment in the placement setting

Practice Supervisor responsibilities (PS). The PS will be a Registered nurse/nursing associate or other registered health/social care professional. In many practice areas you will be supported by a

number of Practice Supervisors. Some areas may adopt a team based approach due to the nature of the experience.

The Practice Supervisor has an important role in supporting and guiding you through your learning experience to ensure safe and effective learning. This includes facilitating learning opportunities including any reasonable adjustments you may need to get maximum benefit from the placement. It is the responsibility of the PS to contribute to your assessment through the recording of regular feedback on their progress towards, and achievement of their proficiencies. The PS must provide specific feedback to the Practice Assessor (PA) on your progress. There are numerous elements requiring assessment in practice. One or more Practice Supervisors can contribute to the assessment of some of the proficiencies in discussion with you, but they must be working in their scope of practice.

Supervision in other placement areas (i.e. those areas where there are no health/social care registrants). A range of staff can support your learning and have a vital role in your learning and development though may not be contributing formally to assessment of proficiencies. However, these staff members are encouraged to support learning and can provide valuable you with feedback within the ENAPAD / PLPAD on the *Record of communication/additional feedback pages*.

Practice Assessor responsibilities (PA). The PA will be a registered nurse/nursing associate. The PA has a key role in assessing and confirming your proficiency providing assurance of your achievements and competence. This includes facilitating learning opportunities including any reasonable adjustments you may need to get maximum benefit from the placement. The PA will observe your conduct and record assessments informed by your reflections, feedback from Practice Supervisors and other relevant people to confirm achievement. The PA will liaise with the Academic Assessor (AA) scheduling communication at relevant points in your programme.

Academic Assessor responsibilities (AA). Academic Assessors are Registered Nurses or Registered Nursing Associate and are nominated for each part of your educational programme. The same Academic Assessor cannot contribute to your assessment in consecutive parts of the programme. The Academic Assessor will work in partnership with the Practice Assessor to evaluate and recommend you for progression for each part of the educational programme. The Academic Assessor will

enable scheduled communication and collaboration with the Practice Assessor and this communication can take a variety of forms.

4.0 Health and Safety on duty

All students have the right to be placed in a safe learning environment in accordance with Health and Safety requirements. In the event of you having concerns regarding your safety you should immediately discuss your concerns with your PS or PA or the Placement Experience Facilitator/Manager (PEF/PEM). At the same time you must inform the Practice Link Tutor for that specific placement area. In the event of you being involved in an incident or sustaining an injury whilst on placement, you must immediately report the incident to the Placement Manager (person in charge of the placement at the time of the incident). You will follow the Trust/Placement procedure in such an event. The Trust/Placement must ensure that a copy of the incident report is sent to the Programme Officer for your programme of study who will inform your Programme Director.

Injury Whilst on Duty

If you have sustained an injury (e.g. sharps/splash) whilst on duty you must:

- Inform the manager of your placement area. If this person is not available you must contact the Trust Occupational Health Department or the Accident and Emergency Department.
- Complete an incident form and follow the local Trust/organisation policy under the guidance of the manager or the person in charge of your placement

5.0 Confidentiality and patient care

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a requirement of all health care practitioners and you are expected to observe this requirement at all times. The Nursing and Midwifery Council, Code (2019, Section five) provides guidelines (see www.nmc-uk.org for more information). You need to be clear regarding information should be given and to whom. For example, what information should be given to other healthcare professionals, patients/clients and relatives. If you have any concerns about confidentiality you should seek advice from your PS, PA or Practice Link Tutor. Under no circumstances should you disclose the identity of patients/clients to unauthorised people outside of the placement area or the Department of Clinical Sciences.

If you have concerns about the care delivery or care management in a practice setting you should discuss your concerns with your placement PS, PA placement manager or Practice Link Tutor immediately. After consultation you may wish to make a formal complaint if you do so you must seek advice and support from your Programme Director. Also see guidance relating to students 'Raising Concerns' https://intra.brunel.ac.uk/chls/cs/Admin/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc={B1993719-F056-4ED3-AC617A915EF9CCB1}&file=Approved%20Rasing%20and%20escalating%20concerns%20guidance%2009.12

If you are writing about a patient in any of your assignments or practice documentation, you must make sure that the identity of the patient/client, the placement area and the Trust remain anonymous to protect the confidentiality of staff, patients/clients and placement areas. If you wish to use documents such as care plans, policies and procedures you must always obtain the permission from the relevant placement manager. Your placement manager must countersign a written record of this permission and you must keep the record. In the case of patient care plans, you must always gain permission directly from the patient or from their legal guardian. You must never remove any form of documentation from the practice placement area and you may only photocopy (anonymised records) with permission from the clinical manager of the practice setting.

In the interests of your own protection you should carefully consider the nature of personal information you disclose to patients/clients i.e. where you live, who you live with etc.

Social Media

Social media has the potential to support and advance learning opportunities and collaborative working both within the University between current students and staff and externally with our partners, alumni and prospective students. There are certain aspects to consider:

- Be aware of how you represent yourself on social media sites and the internet
- Be aware that data could remain on social media sites and on the internet permanently
- Think carefully about the consequences of anything you write or send within social media sites or by email or other electronic media
- Where you are on a programme with Professional Service Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation the NMC please familiarise yourself with the relevant social media policy.

Escorting and Accompanying Patients and to 'Special' Patients

In the interests of your own education, your safety and the safety of your patient/client you may only escort or accompany a patient as part of a planned educational experience and under the direct supervision of a registered health professional. A student cannot 'Special' a patient. To special a patient is defined as intensive observation or care of a patient using one member of staff.

Accompanying Patients for Social or Educational Purposes

You may accompany patients under the following circumstances:

- When you have been assessed to be capable of doing so
- When you feel confident in terms of both your own ability and the patient's mental/ physical state and with the permission of the PS or PA.
- Where you are fully aware of the patient's condition and you feel confident to accompany him/her
- You must not accompany the patient outside the hospital grounds

- In care homes, if the nature of the placement and patient group means that you accompany residents in the community, you should only do this when there is a qualified member of staff present or a registered health professional.
- You may only accompany or escort a patient/s as an additional member of the team to the normal complement of staff. At no time should you be considered as part of the staffing numbers and at no time should you be left in a position of responsibility for these patients.

Responsibility for Patients

At no time must you be left alone with patients in a placement area without supervision. A qualified member of staff must always be present in the placement setting. You must never be asked to be responsible in those situations where there is no staff member present and you cannot be held accountable should a problem arise.

You must never be asked to undertake continuous and intermittent observation i.e. in mental health settings. This is not appropriate in terms of risk accountability (to staff or to patients), or your learning. However, you may find it helpful to accompany a qualified member of staff carrying out these duties. Also you are not allowed to be directly involved in physical intervention or physical restraint (C&R) activity.

Administration of Medicines

You must always follow guidance and policies provided by the professional statutory body (NMC, 2018) and the local NHS Trust/organisation on the administration of medicines.

You must never check or administer medicines on your own or without supervision of a Registered Nurse, Registered Nursing Associate, Midwife or Health Visitor.

IV Medications. you may assist in the preparation of intravenous (IV) medications under the direct supervision of a Registered Nurse (RN/RM) but must not administer IV medications (this includes normal saline flush, changing or restarting IV pumps, syringe drivers or infusions containing drugs) neither can you act as the second checking nurse where two registered Nurses (RN/RM) are required to sign the drugs sheet.

Student Relationships with Patients and Healthcare Staff

You have a responsibility to work collaboratively and in a professional manner with your practice placement provider and its employees, in accordance with local policies and procedures (including the Brunel Learning Agreement and the Nursing and Midwifery Council Code).

Your Relationship with Patients

The relationship between you and patients must always remain professional.

You should never arrange to meet patients socially, either whilst still in placement or whilst the patient is receiving health care.

Sometimes patients may wish to express their appreciation of your work by leaving a gift for you. If a patient wishes to give you a gift you must always act in accordance of with the Nursing and Midwifery Council Guidelines, NMC Code and the policies of the placement provider.

You should never conduct any form of sexual relationship with patients.

Sometimes patients, clients and visitors may appear to behave inappropriately through for example verbal comments/abuse, sexual harassment, lack of inhibitions and physical aggression. All placement providers have a policy of zero tolerance towards this kind of behaviour and it must be immediately reported to your PS/PA or the practitioner in charge.

If you are personally attacked either verbally or physically the policy of your placement provider must be followed. You must also complete an incident form immediately and send a copy to your Programme Director or Personal Tutor for action.

You may find it helpful to discuss your experience with the PEF/PEM, or your placement Practice Link Tutor and your Personal Tutor.

In situations where it is thought that you may be at risk, the placement staff or Practice Link Tutor will discuss this with you and will negotiate an alternative placement experience for you with the Programme Director.

6.0 Sickness or negotiated absence including compassionate leave

All students are required to complete a Health Declaration Questionnaire, which is screened by the University Occupational Health department. You may require an examined by the Occupational Health Physician. If you are on an apprenticeship programme, this will be completed by your employer.

Vaccination and Immunisation it is a requirement that as students you must obtain immunisations or demonstrate your immunity to the following, before undertaking any period of placement – hepatitis B, tuberculosis, poliomyelitis, tetanus, rubella, measles and chickenpox. Students who have not completed their immunisations by the date required will be deemed to have not made themselves available for placement and will not be allocated a placement. If you are on an apprenticeship programme, this will be completed by your employer.

Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) as students are required to provide evidence of CPR training before the first block of practice placement, and thereafter on an annual basis.

You will receive training in manual handling in your place of work and you will be required to show Brunel proof of this training.. This is updated on an annual basis.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is required for all students. As students you are also required to sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year that their DBS disclosure remains valid and that they have not been involved in any criminal activities or received a caution in the UK or elsewhere since it was issued. If you are on an apprenticeship programme, this will be completed by your employer.

As students you are required to inform their practice placement educator and also the practice placement team as soon as possible on the first day of absence if they are

unable to attend the placement, and must inform both of any continuing absence and estimated day of return to placement.

Practice Placement Educators are asked to contact the university when there is absence of 4/5 days or if there is any serious concern over your health/well-being. A length of absence of 4/5 days may leave you with too limited a period of time in which to achieve their learning outcomes and proficiencies. If this is considered the student will be required make up the placement hours or undertake another placement.

Any other reason for a student's absence from placement must be discussed, in the first instance, with the LL and practice placement educator who may refer the matter to the practice placement team at Brunel University or programme director for advice.

Compassionate Leave

You may apply to your Programme Director / Personal Tutor, PA or manager for compassionate leave if you are facing a situation such as bereavement of a close family member, partner or other situation causing serious distress. You must make sure that you inform your personal tutor, your PA or practice area manager as soon as you have permission to take this compassionate leave. This time is added to any sickness or absence record. You might have to make up the time according to the agreement with your Programme Director.

Negotiated Leave for any Other Purpose

Absence for paternity leave or carer leave: you may apply to your Personal Tutor and your Programme Director for special paternity leave or carer's leave. This time will need to be made up to meet the requirements of your programme and the Nursing and Midwifery Council. We recognise that students' religious practice is important. We are aware that the holiday schedule reflects the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter but no other religions. If a festival occurs during semester time we ask that you discuss your individual circumstances with your Personal Tutor at the earliest possible opportunity in order that we can advise you. The course programme is by necessity very detailed and flexibility for individual students' needs may not be possible.

Dentist/Doctors' appointments: You are expected to arrange personal appointments when you are not on duty in your clinical placement.

Making Up Lost Time

- If you have had up to 5 days absence from you placement you may negotiate with your PS or PA to make up the time during the allocation period if these hours are required.
- If you have had 6 days absence or more from any one placement you need to discuss the situation with your Programme Director so arrangements can be made for you to make up the time, either at the end of the academic year or at the end of your programme if these hours are required.
- Whilst academic and placement staff will do their best to accommodate students' requests for a specific return date to their programme or return to a placement this may not always be possible. Your return date will be based on the availability of a suitable placement and it may not be possible for you to return to the same practice area.

7.0 Reasonable adjustments

If you are a student at Brunel University and you have a specific learning difficulty, a mental health condition, long term health condition, physical or sensory disability or autism and you have registered with your evidence, you are able to have reasonable adjustments for your studies. According to the Equality Act 2010 we as the educational provider can make 'reasonable adjustments' so students with disabilities can access higher education without any disadvantage to themselves.

Placements

Some students may find some placements difficult because of their disability. For example you may require specialist equipment whilst on placement. Our placement office can arrange support for you so it is a good idea to think about this in advance. Speak to them and your personal tutor before you go on placement so that any necessary adjustments can be made. It is your responsibility as a student to disclose or not disclose any disability.

8.0 Pregnancy, maternity and paternity leave

If you become pregnant during your programme and you are undertaking practice placement experiences, you and your baby may be at risk, so it is essential that you notify your Programme Director as well as your Personal Tutor as soon as you are aware that you are pregnant. You will be advised to have an Occupational Health check to assess whether you need any reasonable adjustments to your practice experience.

You may attend ante-natal appointments during your placement hours, but you may need to make up the lost time. This must be negotiated with your PS or PA.

If you are pregnant or breast feeding and you are either going to or are on a placement you must inform your placement PS or PA or manager immediately so that an appropriate risk assessment can be made. This is to ensure that your health and safety needs are met during your placement.

If the placement is considered to be too hazardous for you to continue your placement experience then either an alternative placement will be found or if this is not possible and no other reasonable option is available, you may have to commence your maternity break.

When you know the likely date for you to return to your programme you must provide your Programme Director with no less than 4 weeks' notice of your proposed return so that the necessary arrangements can be made, and you can be given the exact date of your return. This date will depend upon the availability of a place being available for you.

See the Brunel's Student Maternity Policy for more information

<https://intra.brunel.ac.uk/s/studentcentre/welfare/Documents/Student%20Pregnancy%20Policy%20V1.1.pdf>

9.0 Raising concerns

NMC Raising Concerns: Guidance for nurses and midwives (NMC 2018) identifies that as a student you have a duty to report any concerns from your practice learning experience / environment which puts the safety of people in your care or the public at risk. We recognise that it is not easy for you to raise a concern; you may be worried if you are doing the right thing, unsure what to do or worried about the consequences for you and other people. This guidance does not replace NMC Raising Concerns or local NHS whistleblowing policy but should be considered in conjunction with this guidance.

10.0 Evaluation of practice learning experiences

All practice placement educators are invited to send their personal evaluation of the placement or the practices surrounding it to the University practice placement tutors. Placements are monitored in a variety of ways to ensure that practice placement educators and students are supported in an appropriate manner. The Lead for Practice education and placement team are available to provide any support required. This process ensures that issues relating to the learning objectives and the quality of the practice placement experience are identified and addressed speedily. Strengths, areas for development, supervision and objectives are included. This is forwarded to the practice placement team. References