

UWE Bsc (Hons) Social Work – Partner Update
September 2021
School of Health and Social Wellbeing
College of Health and Applied Sciences
University of the West of England
Glenside Campus
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The logo for UWE Bristol, University of the West of England, is displayed on a red rectangular background. The text 'UWE Bristol' is in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font. To the right of this, separated by a thin white vertical line, the text 'University of the West of England' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, stacked in three lines.

UWE Social Work Update September 2022

Dear all,

We have now had the opportunity to introduce ourselves to the majority of you but for those that we haven't, we would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves, having taken over from Penny McGee as joint placement leads.

I am Shelley Vickerman, a senior lecturer on the social work programme and placement lead for final year placements. My colleague Margaret Brookes is also a senior lecturer on the programme as well as the placement lead for first placements. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for bearing with us during this transition period and for supporting us so well in this role. We look forward to continuing to work with you all.

We hope that you will find this update useful and welcome any questions or comments you may have.

Best Wishes

Shelley & Margaret

Placement Allocations

We have been working hard to re-build our relationships with our voluntary and independent sector partners who we may not have worked with during the pandemic –

welcome back! We have also continued to work well with our statutory partners to ensure that we are finding the most suitable placement opportunities for our students. At the time of writing, we have only one final placement still to arrange and also have placements agreed for the majority of our second-year students. This is excellent, and we would like to thank you for your continued support of our students. We are very grateful for the exciting and wide-ranging opportunities you have offered!

We have met some challenges in relation to placement allocations, mainly due to the impact that the pandemic has had on our students with many students still having predominantly virtual practice learning experiences in their first placement, meaning they have not had the usual direct practice experience of final level students. These students will benefit from the extensive skills and experience from practitioners within your organisations to develop these skills while on their final placement.

Additionally, many students were unable to learn to drive during the pandemic creating a back log of those wishing to get their driving licence. This, alongside the cost-of-living crisis is meaning we have an increased number of students who are non-drivers and require a placement which can support this. This continues to be difficult, and we continue to need support with placing these students.

Placement Dates Reminder

Final placements (100 days) are planned to commence on **Monday 26th September 2022** with a completion date in March 2023. There will be students who are starting later or earlier depending on individual circumstances and this will naturally affect their completion date.

University recall days will be on Thursdays. There are 5 recall days that count as placement days, as you will see in the module schedule.

Level 2 placements (70 days) are planned to commence on **Monday 3rd October 2022** with a completion date in February 2023. University recall days for this module will be on Fridays.

Placement Meetings

As you know, practice tutors attend the initial practice learning agreement meeting and the interim review meeting. We are asking that at least one of these meetings are held in person. This is in response to ongoing feedback and ensuring students feel settled and well supported in their placements. That being said, we cannot foresee what the autumn and winter season will bring in terms of Covid and we may have to make informed decisions about the practicalities of meeting in person where necessary.

Absence Line and Timesheets

We are continuing to use the absence line and online timesheets for the 2021/22 academic year for both level 2 and 3 placements. The on-line timesheet must be completed weekly and will require the supervisor/practice educator to also sign off each week. Having a concrete record of student attendance should hopefully cut down queries about the total number of days completed and therefore speed up payment being authorised to agencies.

Staff Changes

As you will know, Penny McGee left her post in the summer to take up a position nearer to home and as such, Margaret and I will be sharing the placement lead role with Margaret focusing on level 2 placements and me focusing on final placements.

Matt Proom is a senior lecturer who has recently joined our team and has module lead responsibility for our readiness to practice module. Therefore, Matt may work with some of you in terms of arranging shadowing opportunities for our Level 1 students.

Anna Elliot, who some of you will have met on the Managing Practice Learning course, also moved on from her position in the summer and a new member of staff will be joining us in November.

Sarah Davies who most of you will know has returned to our placement office and has been warmly welcomed back by some of you already.

Learning & Development

Managing Practice Learning

Our MPL course is delivered online, over six consecutive mornings. This is currently running and will end mid-October. We had a high level of interest for the MPL course this year and as a result had to limit attendance to supervisors taking students in this placement round. However, we plan to run another course in the spring and will be in touch with details of this once finalised.

Module Schedules

The module schedules for both modules have been published on Blackboard and students have been asked to make these available to their placement providers. These are also available via practice support net.

Practice Support Net

Practice Support Net is currently being updated and will be ready for you to access all the information you might need regarding student placements very soon. However, should you require any further information, please contact either me or Margaret and we will be pleased to help.