



University of the
West of England

Department of Nursing & Midwifery

Student Placement Information Guide

BSc (Hons) Mental Health Nursing

About this Document

This document is designed to help support you whilst on placement. The aims of the document are to:

- Answer any placement related questions you may have
- Identify where you can access sources of support

It is set out in alphabetical order with information for each topic and is designed to be read online for hyperlinks to the appropriate published information.

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What is a placement?

A placement is where a healthcare student applies theoretical learning to practice and develops practical skills and professional competence to enable them to meet the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Learning Outcomes for registration. All placements have been audited to ensure that they meet your learning needs.

Preparing for Placement: Expectations and Professional Conduct

These are the essential requirements in order to safeguard patients and service users, professional colleagues and you.

Induction

All nursing and midwifery students must attend a mandatory Trust or organisation led specific induction before going into clinical practice in Year 1. Failure to attend will result in you not being allowed to start placement. Trust inductions include essential information relating to health and safety, personal safety, IT access, local Trust policies (for example, administering medication) and dress code. You may have to attend further Trust inductions throughout your placement or if you are placed in another NHS Trust or organisation.

Mandatory requirements before starting placement

Failure to attend or complete any of the following will result in delayed commencement of placement and professional suitability.

Year 1 students

- Manual Handling and Basic Life Support training prior to going out into practice in Year 1
- Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance
- Occupational Health clearance including being up to date with all vaccinations (see section below)
- Completion of the Food Handling workbook
- Trust induction
- Fire safety

Years 2 & 3 students

- Manual Handling and Basic Life Support (BLS) mandatory annual update
- An annual Good Health and Good Character Declaration at the start of years 2 and 3 and at the end of year 3. Any changes to Health that may impact on your ability to complete the outcomes in practice must be declared. An Occupational Health assessment may be required in order to assess fitness for practice
- Trust induction (if moving to a new organisation)

Returning students

- Occupational health clearance may be a requirement of returning to the programme from a period of time out, illness or a back injury
- Manual Handling and Basic Life Support mandatory annual update
- DBS clearance (if you have been out for longer than 12 months)
- Trust induction (if joining a new organisation or Trust)

Working With Your Mentor

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) requires students to work with a mentor for at least 40% of the time during practice placements. Ideally this should be your allocated mentor who will complete your OAR document. You may also work with a registered nurse or other professional who is not a mentor; they can sign you off against specific competencies with the mentor's agreement.

Tips for a Successful Placement

It is your responsibility to learn as much as possible whilst on placement, and although some of the following tips seem obvious, they increase your chance of success.

Before starting the placement

- Make sure you are familiar with your assessment documentation, the competencies you need to achieve and what the university expects of you for each placement.
- Know The Code: professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives.
- Contact the placement in advance to discuss the type of placement, working hours, off-duty requests, dress code, car parking, etc.
- Research and arrange/organise your travelling arrangements, childcare etc.

When on placement

- Be friendly, enthusiastic and professional in your manner
- Meet with your mentor as soon as possible to discuss your learning needs and the clinical staff expectations
- Be willing to participate in care and help your colleagues
- Ask for help when you need it. Always admit when you don't know something
- Be punctual and adhere to the area's dress code, policies & procedures
- Get to know the patients/clients, staff and personnel allied to the placement area
- Take advantage of any learning opportunities internal and external to the placement area
- Find out what learning opportunities are available to you outside the placement area and take advantage of them with your mentor's agreement
- Reflection is a valuable learning tool, so take the opportunity to reflect on your experiences with peers; with your mentor; and by keeping a reflective diary
- Get to know the common conditions with which patients/clients present

- Ask appropriate questions
- Read the placement area's student literature
- Discuss any concerns with the staff as and when they arise
- When it's quiet, or if you are unsure whether there is anything you can do to help, ask the staff what you can do or talk to patients of clients and develop your communication skills
- Placement staff may choose to let you go home early. If they do, please be appreciative and don't assume you will do this every shift. Beware asking to leave early as it may appear to the staff that you are not interested in learning and are not committed to your course.
- Contact the Practice Support Line on 0117 32 81152 as soon as possible if you are having problems.

Placement Documentation

Read your placement documentation (Ongoing Achievement Record) before starting the placement so that you understand what is expected of you. The documentation states the learning outcomes and level you need to achieve whilst on placement.

It is your responsibility to complete the main parts of the document, including any self-assessment. It is a good idea to have your assessment document with you at all times when on placement so that you can complete items as the opportunity arises. However, beware leaving it at the placement as there is a risk it may be lost. If your mentor is unable to complete your documentation before the end of your placement, arrange a time to return and have it completed as soon as possible after the placement ends. If you are having problems completing your document and your mentor is unable to help then contact the Practice Support Line as soon as possible.

Absence for Military Reservist Duties

See Sickness and Absence Reporting.

Access Plans for Students with Disabilities and Reasonable Adjustments

An Access Plan is an informal meeting, designed to give the student an opportunity to discuss their needs around placements and any support or reasonable adjustments that could be put in place including access to the placement, parking and travel, the working day including shifts and nights/weekend work. It may also cover equipment and documentation and anything else that is relevant to their learning experience on placement. Following the meeting, a short report will be written by the Disability Advisor, which will be circulated to everyone present at the meeting. It is then the responsibility of the student to show this report to the appropriate staff members whilst on placement in order for any support and adjustments to be put in place. If you feel that you may benefit from having an access plan, please contact your Academic Personal Tutor (APT) in the first instance.

Accommodation for Placements

Students are able to arrange accommodation for placements if they are unable to travel to placement on a daily basis; however this will incur additional costs. Please contact the Student Advisors via the Information Points for further advice.

Adoption Support Leave

See Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption and Partner Leave.

Advanced Life Support

All third year students undertake aspects of intermediate life support (ILS) training as part of their life support (LS) session. You need to complete two MCQs online (Adult BLS & Automated External Defibrillation) before you attend the session and bring the result print out for both with you. The pass mark is 75%.

Adverse Weather (Snow/Flood)

Students should check the University website for advice on University closures and the local radio for travel information. Although University sites may be closed during adverse weather conditions, your placement is unlikely to be closed and you should make safe and reasonable efforts to attend your shift. Please check the Trust or organisation's website for information and the local radio news. However, there will be times when you are unable to do so and can be

given authorised absence. You should contact the placement to let them know you are unable to attend and contact the Practice Absence Reporting Line on 0117 32 83283.

If a mentor suggests that you leave your placement early as the weather looks like it could deteriorate, you will be credited with the full shift.

Annual Leave Policy

All [annual leave](#) is fixed during the 3 years of the programme and students are unable to take annual leave outside of these times. Any attempt to swap or change your annual leave periods could be construed as unprofessional behaviour, and may result in investigation under the [Professional Suitability and Professional Conduct Policy](#).

ARC

[ARC](#) is a web-based system that provides access for students to their placement and absence details with the ability to update their contact information online. This is where you will be notified of your next placement, normally with 6 weeks' notice. You can use ARC to complete the self-declaration of good health and good character, evaluate your previous placement (to release placement details of the next) and check the number of practice hours you have completed and find out information about your placement.

Authorised Absence

See Sickness and Absence Reporting.

Bank Holidays

Students are not required to attend placement over Christmas or New Year. However, if your practice placement falls during Bank Holiday periods such as Good Friday, Easter Monday, May and August Bank Holidays, you may be expected to work on these days as normal. Hours worked on these days are counted as normal placement hours and not as enhanced or extra hours.

Basic Life Support

All students undertake basic life support (BLS) training each year. Each year, students need to complete the adult BLS MCQs online before you attend the session and bring the result print out with you with a pass mark of 75%. In addition, first year students must also complete and bring the Paediatric BLS MCQ with a pass mark of 75%.

Car Parking

Car parking whilst on placement is limited or non-existent at most Trusts. It is therefore advisable for students to find out before starting their placement if there are any facilities for student car parking. [On-site parking at UWE](#) is available at Glenside and Frenchay campuses by displaying the relevant parking permit. Parking is available at [Gloucester Quays](#) for UWE Gloucester students.

Carers Leave

See Sickness and Absence Reporting.

Compassionate Leave

See Sickness and Absence Reporting.

Disability Services

The [Disability Service](#) offers a wide range of support for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and recognises that there are a range of access needs that may be appropriate depending upon your circumstances and choice of course. The [Disability Services](#) also offers a wide range of support services for students including assisted technologies, assessment and support for specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, and support with reasonable adjustments for placements via an access plan.

Students with a Disability

If you have a disability which may affect your placement, discuss your concerns with the programme leader in order that they can offer the appropriate support and arrange an access planning meeting. The [University Disability Service](#) has a range of support services for students.

Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)

All nursing and midwifery programmes require an enhanced [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) check prior to starting the programme and you will not be allowed into practice until you have DBS clearance. You must send your certificate to Admissions as per the joining instructions as we no longer receive a copy. All students with a police conviction or caution on their DBS certificate will be seen by the programme leader in order to decide whether they are eligible to remain on the programme. If you have a concern about your DBS certificate, please contact the programme leader.

Disclosure of Criminal or Pending Criminal Convictions

Nursing and midwifery are self-regulating professions. A significant aspect of self-regulation is knowing what is right or what is important. All nurses and midwives are required to abide by the NMC rules and standards which include the code. It is therefore essential for you as a student to disclose any criminal or pending criminal convictions you may have. [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act \(1974\)](#) does not apply and all convictions, including those which are spent, must be disclosed. Student nurses must undergo a DBS check (previously known as a Criminal Records Bureau check) and will be required to complete a disclosure application form. All information will be treated in confidence. If you receive a criminal conviction during the period of your nurse training, it is a requirement of both the University and the NMC that it is declared. In the first instance, this should be reported to your Academic Personal Tutor and Programme Leader.

How to complete the declaration

Students have to self-declare that they are of good health and good character prior to starting Years 2 & 3 by logging into [ARC and completing the declaration](#). In Year 1, students have to have Disclosure Barring Service clearance prior to starting NP1.

Students who do not complete the Good Health/Good Character declaration within the allotted time frame will have the following sanctions applied:

- 1) Prevented from attending practice until this is completed
- 2) Seen under the [Professional Suitability Policy](#)

Students who do complete the Good Health/Good Character declaration but are subsequently found to have either misrepresented their situation or not informed the Programme Leader of any changes will be dealt with under the Professional Suitability Policy.

Dyslexia

The most common form of disability at the University is dyslexia. This along with related specific learning difficulties such as dyspraxia affects around 5% of the student population. Whilst many students with dyslexia will have been diagnosed at school or college, some do not realise that they have dyslexia until they reach university. They may have developed strategies for dealing with the difficulties which they face without understanding that these are related to dyslexia. This is particularly true for older students. If you think you may have dyslexia, contact [Disability Services](#) for an assessment.

Elective Placements

Eligible students are able to apply to have an [elective opportunity](#) abroad. Information is available through Blackboard which includes information about the application process.

Erasmus Opportunities

All eligible Year 3 nursing and midwifery students can apply to go on a 12 week [Erasmus opportunity](#) in Year 3.

European Union Working Time Directive

European Union Working Time Directives mean that no-one should not work more than 48 hours in one week. Ideally, students should not work more than 42 hours whilst at UWE to ensure that you are fully rested and able to maximise your learning whilst on placement. This also applies if you are making up time in the placement. The maximum hours to be worked over a 4 week period are 192 hours. Under the same legislation, students are entitled to 2 days off a week but these may not be consecutive. You must also have an 11 hour rest period within a 24 hour period, e.g. you cannot do a night shift followed by a late shift if both fall within the same 24 hour period.

Extenuating Circumstances

If you experience something major that affects your ability to sit an exam, complete placement or submit a piece of coursework, you may be eligible to apply for [Extenuating Circumstances](#). Please contact the Information Point if you require support with completing the online form. Seek support from your Programme Leader if you are unable to complete your placement.

Extensions

If you experience a major circumstance e.g. bereavement or serious illness, you may be eligible to apply for a [5-working day extension](#).

Fitness to Practice – see Good Health

The NMC state that all students must be [fit to practice](#).

Flu Vaccinations

You may be eligible to have a flu vaccination whilst on placement. Staff involved in direct patient care including students should be advised to enquire about vaccination when in a placement where the seasonal flu vaccine is offered to staff. See:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/annual-flu-programme>

Good Health/Good Character Annual Declaration

Good health and good character are fundamental to fitness to practise as a nurse or midwife. All nursing and midwifery students are expected to work towards being able to apply the code at the point of registration and should be guided by [The Code: professional standards of practice and](#)

[behaviour for nurses and midwives](#). An important determinant of good character is the individual's commitment to, and compliance with, the code.

The rules relating to good health and good character require nurses and midwives to self-declare their fitness for entry to the register, on renewal of registration and readmission to the register. Additionally, a supporting declaration from a third party is required on application for first entry to a part of the NMC register. For students, this is provided by the Head of Department at the University of the West of England.

Good health and good character – what do we mean?

Good health is necessary to undertake practice as a nurse or midwife. Good health means that you must be capable of safe and effective practice without supervision and are able to make good quality decisions about peoples' care. It does not mean the absence of any disability or health condition. Many disabled people and those with health conditions are able to practise with or without adjustments to support their practice. If you are a nurse or midwife in poor health, it means that you are affected by a physical or mental health condition that impairs your ability to practise without supervision.

Good character is important and is central to the NMC code in that nurses and midwives must be honest and trustworthy. Your good character is based on your conduct, behaviour and attitude. It also takes account of any convictions, cautions and pending charges that are likely to be incompatible with professional registration. Your character must be sufficiently good for you to be capable of safe and effective practice without supervision.

Grading in Practice

From Sept 13 cohorts onwards, all Year 2 & 3 students will be [graded in practice](#) if they have passed the placement. Formative grading occurs in Year 2 with summative grading in the final Year 3 practice placement.

Health and Safety

Accident Reporting in Practice

If you have an accident in practice, you must follow the Trust's local Accident or Incident policy. You should also ensure that the accident/incident is reported to the University by using the [UWE online accident report form](#). You may wish to contact the Practice Academic Team to support you with this.

Lone Working

Indirect supervision or lone working may form part of the normal pattern of care for particular patients/clients as identified by the nursing, allied health or social care

professional. All activities are to promote your learning and is a negotiated event sanctioned by the appropriate Mentor/Educator.

You must be given prior access to the Lone Worker policies for the organisation and made aware of any health and safety requirements that apply in the practice setting. You must be able to seek clarification and be given the opportunity to practise under supervision any safety or other intervention techniques that may be required before undertaking such activities unsupervised.

In order to develop the skills that are required of a qualified practitioner, you must be an active participant in practice. However, unaccompanied visits with, or to patients or service users should only be undertaken after careful consideration of the following factors:

- The students' stage of training
- The students' capability/previous experience
- The type and nature of the skills being developed
- Qualified staff knowledge of the patient/client/service user and the situation and potential risks involved in lone working
- The patients/clients are well known to the service providers and are an established service user and where relevant, have been previously assessed by a caseload manager/team leader and deemed appropriate for the student to visit
- The student must not use their own vehicle if they cannot provide evidence of business insurance cover

Students must adhere to the following:

- The student has read and understood the local policies and procedures for Incident Reporting, Health and Safety, Risk Assessment and Lone Working
- There is feedback after the intervention between the student and the professional that includes the completion of any formal documentation associated with the visit. The entry should be followed up, witnessed and countersigned by the supervising professional at later date
- You are able to terminate a visit if circumstances change or you feel vulnerable/unsafe
- Those with direct responsibility for supervising and sanctioning a student's indirectly supervised learning experience that involves a motorised journey to a service user, are advised to satisfy themselves that the student has made this amendment to their motor insurance policy. This can be seen as both good and safe practice
- Students are not allowed to carry service users or their carer's as passengers. Students should follow the policy of the placement provider with regards to driving any unit vehicle. Exceptions to this can only take place after a full risk assessment in-line with the placement provider's own policy and procedures for carrying service users
- Ensure the patient agrees to receive care from a student without direct supervision from a registered nurse or other healthcare professional
- That the tasks undertaken are within the scope of practice and competence and follow guidelines set by the University, and NMC. If you are not sure please contact the Practice Support Line or your APT for guidance. Check the decision

making framework in your OAR and, if applicable, the field specific skills framework found in your OAR

- Uniform - to check what dress code is expected for particular experiences (see Uniform Policy)
- Mobile phone use by students during community placement cannot be reimbursed by the university
- Personal Security - If you're able to visit a patient or client on your own you must tell your mentor or community team who you are visiting, how long you expect to be and expected return time; someone must be aware of your whereabouts on placement. Please follow the placements guidance on this as you may be expected to check in after every visit

Lone Working – Vehicle Insurance

Students who choose to use their own car or motorbike whilst allocated for community experience must ensure that they have arranged business cover through their Motor Insurance Company. Students are responsible for ensuring they hold a current valid driving licence, their vehicle is taxed, has a current MOT certificate, and they have appropriate insurance with business cover or are covered by the organisations insurance. You cannot make claims for wear and tear of the car, including tyre wear and tear. If you cannot evidence Business Cover for your motor vehicle, the indirectly supervised learning opportunity must not take place.

Needle-Stick Injuries

If you sustain a needle-stick injury, you must follow the Trust's local Needle-stick Injury policy which will include attending Occupational Health as soon as possible. You must also ensure that the incident is reported to the University by using the [UWE online accident report form](#). You may wish to contact the Practice Support Line to get support from your Practice Academic Team.

Implications

If you declare a health condition or disability you should be assessed, where appropriate, with support from the occupational health department, or a disability services team or adviser or other medical practitioner where appropriate. Any assessment relating to disability should focus on what reasonable adjustments can be made to support you to achieve entry to or maintenance on our register.

Information Points

[Information Points](#) are located near reception at both Glenside and Gloucester campuses and can support students with many issues including applying for extenuating circumstances, advice about fees, university regulations and providing replacement student ID cards.

Interview Day

Students are entitled to 1 day in Year 3 to attend and prepare for interviews which can be counted as practice hours. You should have these recorded on your timesheets (if during placement) and signed for by your mentor or APT once appropriate evidence (such as a letter or email inviting you to interview) has been seen.

Invasive Procedures

You may have the opportunity to either visit or complete a placement within Operating Departments. It is imperative that your health and safety is maintained whilst you are in this clinical area. Staff who work in operating departments have enhanced health clearance before they undertake procedures known as "exposure prone procedures". Exposure prone procedures means when you might insert a hand into a wound. Student Nurses do not have this health clearance. Student Nurses can 'scrub' to handle instruments and observe more closely, but cannot participate in any procedures in which they might be inserting their hands into a wound. Please ensure that you adhere to this guidance for your own protection.

Jury Service

See Sickness and Absence reporting.

Latex Allergy

Healthcare workers who frequently use latex gloves are at risk for developing latex allergy. It can also cause irritant contact dermatitis. This causes dry, itchy, irritated areas on the skin, most often on the hands. It can be caused by the irritation of using gloves, or it can also be caused by exposure to other workplace products. Frequent hand washing, incomplete drying, exposure to hand sanitizers, and the talc-like powder coatings (zinc oxide, etc.) used with gloves can aggravate symptoms. If you have or suspect that you have a latex allergy, you should contact your APT or programme leader(s) for an Occupational Health referral. It may also be advisable for you to seek advice from your GP.

Legislative Requirements

The Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 (the order) required the NMC to establish and maintain a register and, in doing so, to prescribe the requirements to be met as to the evidence of good health and good character in order to satisfy the Registrar that an applicant is capable of safe and effective practice as a nurse or midwife. The requirements for registration are specific (please see [NMC website](#) for further information).

Manual Handling

All students are required to undertake manual handling training each year. In year 1, you need to have completed manual handling A & B before you are able to start placement. This is followed by a further session before placement 2, and annually thereafter. Sessions are practical, and you are required to wear uniform and (specifically) suitable shoes.

You should complete preparatory work before each practical session – this may be a MCQ, a risk assessment or problem-solving scenario. You are required to take evidence of completion to the timetabled session. This information is given via Blackboard through the Mandatory Training tab which should be available to all students.

Maternity Leave

See Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption and Partner Leave.

Maternity Support Leave

See Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption and Partner Leave.

Meal Breaks

Students are entitled to a 20 minute break for every 6 hours worked. You are also entitled to a lunch break which is usually 30 minutes; lunch breaks are not counted as hours worked.

myUWE Student Portal

[myUWE](#) is the University's portal and is where you register online. It is where you find your timetable, provisional coursework marks and maintenance pages for your personal information. You can also find announcements advising of important faculty or course information.

NMC Progression Points (2010)

The NMC (2010) has set minimum requirements that must be met by the first and second progression points for pre-qualifying nursing and midwifery education, which states that all outcomes within a progression point period must be achieved and confirmed within 12 weeks of entering the next part of the programme. Progression points occur at the end of Level 1 (Year One) and at the end of Level 2 (Year Two). This applies to all theory and practice modules. Non achievement by the end of the 12-week placement will require you to intermit from the programme without bursary until you have passed.

Noroviruses

Noroviruses are transmitted directly from person to person and indirectly via contaminated water and food. They are extremely contagious. If your placement area has a norovirus outbreak, please ensure that you adhere to the local Trust policy. It may be advisable for you to contact the Practice Support Line for Practice Academic Team support.

Numeracy

All students are required to undertake a timetabled online in-class numeracy test in each academic year as part of your practice module. Students are able to practice the test via the Mandatory Training Blackboard site. [ExpressoMaths](#) drop in support is available at both Frenchay and Glenside campuses. Every student gets four attempts each year. Failure to pass by the end of each year will mean you cannot pass practice. Your profile will be discussed at the Award Board to consider whether further attempts will be offered.

Occupational Health Service

The University has a contract with the [Avon Partnership NHS Occupational Health Service](#) for assessment, advice and guidance in relation to fitness to return to practice placements and other health related matters. Please note that **all back injuries** must be assessed by OH prior to returning to placement. If you sustain a back injury, please inform the programme leader as soon as possible so that they can refer to you to Occupational Health and make a plan to support you.

You may be asked to contact the service directly for telephone advice before a referral is made for you. All students should declare all health conditions before you start on the programme so that a judgement can be made whether you are fit to undertake the programme. If you do not declare a known health condition which compromises your ability to be in placement, this may be considered under the [UWE Professional Suitability and Professional Conduct Policy](#).

Paid Employment Outside of the Nursing or Midwifery Programme

All pre-registration nursing and midwifery courses are regarded as full-time courses. You have a professional responsibility to ensure that you are fit to attend your practice learning opportunity and/or University and to ensure the safety of those under your care as well as for your own health and well-being. You should adhere to the European Working Time Directive. Paid shifts must not be substituted for placement or theoretical learning.

Partner leave/Maternity Support Leave (formally paternity leave)

See Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption and Partner Leave.

Patient/Carer Feedback Forms

Where appropriate, pre-registration student nurses are expected to obtain feedback from patients and carers regarding their care delivery using the [Patient and Carers Feedback Form](#). The aim of obtaining feedback from patients and carers is to support evidence of learning for the Ongoing Achievement Record (OAR) which in turn will help the mentor's assessment process. It is at the mentor's discretion as to which patient or carer is considered appropriate; please follow your mentor's advice here.

Placements Allocations

Placements are allocated through the Professional Practice Office and each placement must meet the NMC requirements of the programme. If you have a personal reason to not be allocated to a particular placement area or speciality (for example, family member is a service user or works in that area), then you can do so through negotiation with the programme leader. You must be prepared to travel to the placement allocation within the university's geographical locations. Because of the complexity of placements and the need to ensure transparency, tracking and equity, students are not allowed to contact and/or organise their own placements.

Placement Charter

The practice education of nursing and midwifery students is a partnership between students, university staff and placement areas. The [Nursing and Midwifery Placement Charter](#) outlines the expectations and responsibilities of all those involved. The charter's underlying principles are that all individuals will be treated with courtesy and respect and be treated as a valued member of the wider inter-professional team.

Practice Absence Report Line

If you are absent from placement, you must report it to the Practice Absence Report Line and your placement. On contacting your placement, please make sure you:

- Speak to your mentor or other registered nurse
- Take the name of the person you are speaking to
- Inform them of the reason for the absence
- Inform them when you intend to return

You should email practiceabsence@uwe.ac.uk or call 0117 32 83283 and leave a message with your name, contact number, current placement details and reason for your absence. Calls are not routinely returned from this number. If you wish to speak to someone, you should call the Practice Support Line on 0117 32 81152.

Practice Academic Teams

Practice Academic Teams work in geographical teams to support students whilst on placement and should be the first point of contact if you require support whilst in practice. They can be contacted through the Practice Support Line hscpsl@uwe.ac.uk or 0117 32 81152.

Practice Hours

You must complete all the hours stated for the placement over the time period specified. It is not acceptable to 'bank' extra hours worked in order to shorten the length of the placement. Placement lengths have been carefully worked out in order to give you the best possible opportunity to pass the required learning outcomes. You are expected to undertake all shifts that reflect the normal work pattern of the practice learning opportunity, including primary care settings. The Key Mentor, Clinical Placement Manager, Ward Manager, or Team Leader for each practice learning opportunity will determine the shifts you undertake.

In order to meet the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) requirements for registration, every student is required to complete a minimum of 2,300 hours of clinical practice. Without certification of these hours, you will be delayed in qualifying and will not be able to register as a nurse or midwife. If you cannot meet this requirement before the scheduled end of the course, you will have to make up hours to the required total. This includes any time missed through sickness/absence; jury service, compassionate leave, or authorised absence.

Practice hours include all time spent on placement including Trust or organisation inductions and training. Supervision of Learning Days (SoLD) and any simulation days spent at University are counted as practice hours. You will therefore need to sign a register when you attend these days and have your timesheet signed by an academic member of staff facilitating UWE days or sessions. Failure to get timesheets signed both in practice and in University will result in these hours being counted as absence and you will be required to 'make up' the hours missed. Hours missed through simulation or SoLD will be made up in practice settings.

Practice hours are recorded in [ARC](#) using the information provided from timesheets. Any queries about the information held on ARC should be directed in the first instance to Cliff.Woolley@uwe.ac.uk.

Practice Support Line

The Practice Support Line is a confidential helpline for nursing and midwifery mentors and students. Students are encouraged to use this line to report concerns whilst on placement and seek support from Practice Academic Teams if required. Contact details are: hscpsl@uwe.ac.uk and 0117 32 81152.

Practice Support Net

The [Practice Support Net](#) provides advice, guidance and tools to support mentors in their mentorship role. It gives [guidance by programme](#) and information about [grading in practice](#) which you may also find useful.

Pregnant Students

See Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption and Partner Leave.

Professional Communication

During your training, you will engage in a range of communication across the nursing and midwifery spectrum; with nursing colleagues as well as other health and social care practitioners, services users, family members, carers and academic staff. This will include written and verbal communication conducted variously across a range of mediums. You are expected to conduct yourself appropriately and professionally at all times; ensuring and respecting confidentiality, equality, diversity and good ethical practice as outlined in the NMC code of conduct and practice.

Advancements and the increased use of ICT with digital technology increases the risk of confidential patient/service user information being made available to many people and care should be taken to ensure the use of these should not compromise patient/service user safety, confidentiality and treatment. Particular emphasis is placed on the appropriate use of emails for correspondence purposes. Patient/service users and their families/carers should never be discussed via social networking sites.

Professional Practice Office (PPO)

The Professional Practice Office manages all student placements allocations, the Practice Support Line, Practice Absence Line and ARC. For key contacts, see [this link](#).

Professional Suitability and Professional Conduct Policy

The University provides a number of programmes of study where students' professional suitability to register for and undertake the programmes will be relevant and will require assessment and monitoring by the University. These programmes of study are ones which lead to professional registration and/or a license to practise in a professional context and are characterised as being practice-centred and directed towards the achievement of professional competence and/ or professional registration. In addition, all of these programmes are accredited and/or regulated by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies which are involved in the design, delivery and regulation of programmes.

Programmes within the Department of Nursing and Midwifery are monitored and approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). In particular, the NMC is concerned with seeking to ensure

that students comply with The Code and demonstrate developing standards of professionalism. All nursing and midwifery students are bound by the [NMC Code](#).

In light of the above, the University needs to be satisfied that students registering for and undertaking such programmes are professionally suitable to do so in the context of the professional area concerned, and with reference to the standards of the particular profession and the requirements of the NMC. Students registering for and undertaking such programmes are bound by the [UWE Professional Suitability and Professional Conduct Policy](#) and are required at all times to demonstrate acceptable standards of conduct, demonstrate relevant values and attitudes, satisfy relevant criminal record requirements, and satisfy relevant health requirements for the programme concerned, as set out in the programme handbook.

The Professional Suitability Policy and Professional Conduct Policy sets out how the University may respond to instances where a concern is raised regarding a student's professional suitability and the type of action that the University may take to deal with the concern, and to support the student. In appropriately serious cases, the University has the right to suspend and/or terminate a student's registration on the programme.

Examples of where professional suitability concerns may arise include (but are not limited to) instances where a student has or is suspected of having:

- health, mental health, emotional or inter-personal problems
- failure to comply with professional body requirements in relation to fitness to practise as specified at any point in time
- failure to act within the statutory frameworks which set out students' professional duties and responsibilities
- breached standards of acceptable conduct (professional or otherwise) such as those set out in the University's Charter or by the NMC, for example:
 - abuse or harassment (including verbal, physical, sexual or emotional)
 - violent, aggressive or threatening behaviour (physical, verbal or other)
 - failure to treat others with dignity or respect, or practise in a non-discriminatory way
 - dishonesty or untrustworthiness (such as the misrepresentation of qualifications or professional experience, or the forging of documents or signatures)
 - repeat or serious assessment offences
 - the commission or suspected commission of a criminal offence
 - alcohol or drug abuse/problem
 - unsociable behaviour which adversely affects the proper operation of placement/work-based settings
 - the failure to demonstrate an attitude or demeanour appropriate for individuals working in the profession concerned
 - breach of confidentiality
 - lack of motivation or interest and/or failure to participate in learning activities (e.g. small group/problem-based learning, portfolio development, practice placements, presentations, academic or pastoral tutorials, or multi/inter-professional focused sessions)

- inconsistent, unreliable or inappropriate behaviour in placement/work-based learning settings and where, due to the professional nature of the programme, the student's professional suitability may be or may become impaired as a result because (for example):
 - a risk is posed to the student's own health and safety and/or that of others
 - the proper operation of the profession is or may be adversely affected
 - a relevant placement or work based setting is or may be adversely affected
 - the profession is brought into disrepute.

The University recognises that concerns regarding students' professional suitability may arise in a variety of ways (e.g. as a result of a student's practice, academic performance or his/her conduct, or issues raised by University staff, other students, health professionals or placement providers).

The University may consider concerns regarding students' professional suitability, howsoever they arise and will take action to deal with concerns promptly and fairly with a view to managing matters effectively and supporting students and other persons concerned (e.g. other students, staff or clients in a professional setting).

The University recognises that dealing with matters in this way is critical not only to ensuring that relevant professional standards are attained and maintained but also to supporting student learning and academic achievement and to the furtherance of a positive student experience.

This Policy and Procedure applies to students throughout their period of registration with the University, both on and off campus, and at all times. It is not limited to term time.

In implementing this Policy and Procedure, the University will remain mindful of its duty of care and of its obligations to students under the Equality Act 2010 including in appropriate cases to make reasonable adjustments. It will also remain mindful of the confidential and sensitive nature of professional suitability matters and of its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Raising and Escalating Concerns

The NMC has published guidance on [Raising Concerns: Guidance for nurses and midwives](#) setting out broad principles that will help practitioners think through the issues and take appropriate action in the public interest. This includes information on recent legislation that offers protection to whistle blowers as well as updated information on organisations nurses and midwives can go to for further advice. UWE also has a [policy on raising and escalating concerns](#) where students are directed to contact the Practice Support Line in the first instance.

Raising and Reporting Concerns that a Nurse or Midwife is not Fit to Practise

If you have a concern that someone who is registered as a nurse or midwife is not fit to practise because of a health or character issue, you have a duty outlined in the code to make your

concerns known. In the first instance, you should discuss this with your APT or Practice Academic Team.

Reasonable Adjustments

It is your responsibility to inform UWE of any health related issues which may impact on your clinical practice. Support and reasonable adjustments will be made via an access planning meeting. The Equality Act (2010) requires the University and placements to make reasonable adjustments for students in clinical placements, under the [Disability and Equality Issues guidance](#). If you feel that you may benefit from having an access plan, please contact your APT in the first instance.

Retrieval of Practice

If you fail the final placement of each academic year, a retrieval placement will be considered at the award board. All students need to have successfully completed practice before the end of the first 12 weeks of the subsequent year in order to meet NMC requirements. If this is not possible, you will be required to step off the programme and return at a later date if appropriate. Please note, a retrieval placement is not an automatic right and the decision is made by the award board panel, not a member of the programme team. Retrieval placements are arranged through the Professional Practice Office and are usually for a minimum of 5 weeks, but may be longer. Seek support from your practice module leader or APT in the first instance.

Self-directed Study Days during Practice Placements

You are not entitled to self-directed study days during practice placement. These cannot be negotiated for dissertation supervision or other coursework preparation which should be conducted on days off.

Shift Patterns

The working week is 37.5 hours and you should not be on placement for more than 150 hours in any 4 week period. Due to shift patterns, you may find that you work fewer than 37.5 hours in one week. Your mentor will ensure that you achieve 150 hours in practice over the 4 week period. European Union Working Time Directives mean that you should not work more than 48 hours in one week. Ideally, students should not work more than 42 hours whilst at UWE to ensure that you are fully rested and able to maximise your learning whilst on placement. This also applies if you are making up time in the placement. The maximum hours to be worked over a 4 week period are 192 hours. For more information; see EU Working Time Directive.

Students are expected to work the shift pattern adhered to by the placement and follow their named mentor as closely as possible and for at least 40% of the time ([NMC requirement](#)). However, in some placement areas, it may not be possible to work the same shift pattern as

registered staff. As is the expectation for registered staff and to meet the NMC requirements, students are expected to manage their child caring responsibilities around their shift patterns. Shifts are rostered by your mentor or the key mentor for the clinical placement area. You may make requests for certain shift patterns with a minimum of one week's notice. Your mentor is not obliged to grant your request. You should be mindful of the needs of other students on placement with you and ensure that requests for weekends or nights are fair.

Shift patterns can vary across and within organisations. You should ask what the placement records as the length of a shift and put that figure on your timesheet for 'long days' etc. University days such as simulation or Supervision of Learning Days (SoLD) are generally 7.5 hours unless advised differently by the module or programme leader.

It is an [NMC requirement](#) that students undertake 24 hour, 7 day care and so students are expected to undertake night duty and weekends (Saturday and Sunday).

- You will need to work shifts whilst on clinical placement.
- You will be expected to work weekends (Saturday and Sunday).
- You will also be expected to work night shifts. You should not do more than 3 consecutive night shifts. You should not be expected to work a night shift which ends on the morning of a scheduled university day, or starts in the evening of a university day.
- Shift patterns vary
- All university days such as simulation or Supervision of Learning (SoLD) are 7.5 hours
- If you are sick or absent, the weekly total is reduced by the number of hours sick or absent

Sickness and Absence Reporting

Reporting absence fulfils the conduct of a professional practitioner and it is an expectation that all students will comply with this. It is essential the University maintains a record of any absences as it is a requirement of the NMC that all Nursing and Midwifery students have completed 2300 hours in clinical practice and 2300 hours in theoretical learning. Failure to complete the required hours by the end of the three years will result in sickness/absence time being completed to make up hours and delay NMC registration and allocation of personal identification numbers (PINs).

Sickness or Absence – what to do

If you are sick, you must report it to the placement at least 1 hour before the shift starts and to the Practice Absence Reporting Line (0117 328 3283). On contacting the placement please make sure you:

- Speak to your mentor or other registered nurse or midwife
- Take the name of the person you are speaking to
- Inform them when you intend to return
- Follow any additional local reporting procedure.
- You must comply with local Occupational Health policies, for example, on return to placement following diarrhoea and vomiting

- If you are experiencing an episode of sickness and vomiting, Trust policy excludes you from returning to placement until 48 hours after your last bout of vomiting. This reduces cross infection to patients and colleagues

Sickness or Absence of less than 5 days

If you have less than 5 days sickness or absence in a block during a placement then you may negotiate with the placement to make up hours in the placement. You can make up this time at the next available time (days off) equivalent to 24 hours for placements up to 7 weeks in length and 35 hours for placements over 7 weeks. These should be recorded on your timesheets in the *makeup hours box*, and signed by your mentor. These makeup hours will then be added to your ARC record by the PPO team. You can make up time lost in one placement at the next placement but you should agree this with your APT as some practice hours may need to be achieved in certain placement types.

You **MUST NOT EXCEED** the European working time directive and work above 48 hours per week – so if you have worked 36 hours in the week, the maximum you can make up is 12 hours.

For students who are required to make up hours beyond the number allowed above, there will be an option at the end of Year 1 and Year 2 to undertake additional hours in practice in the leave period. This will be in blocks of 5 days or more but should not be for the full annual leave period. The Trust/Organisation that has hosted the final placement in that year will be informed of this option to ascertain where this may be achieved. If approved it may be at the previous placement and available through that Trust/Organisation. This may not always be possible as those areas may have staff training or leave at a time they would not normally have students on placement.

Sickness or Absence of 6 days or more

If you are absent or sick for more than 6 days during a placement then how and when hours will be made up must be discussed with the Programme Leader. It is not always possible to make up time in the same practice learning opportunity particularly where the time to make up is over 5 days. If you are sick for up to 6 consecutive days you must submit a self-certification form. These are available from the Information Point and should be submitted directly to the Professional Practice Office. If you are sick for 7 days or more, a medical certificate is required. This should be submitted directly to the Professional Practice Office.

Students who have long periods of sickness, or frequent short-term sickness/absence, will be required to attend Occupational Health for a health assessment, which the Programme Leader will request. You may be required to intermit from the programme if the absence is lengthy as you may not be able to meet the learning outcomes to pass placement.

You may be entitled to up to 60 days sickness without losing NHS bursary.

All other authorised absence needs to be negotiated with your Academic Personal Tutor or Programme Leader:

- Authorised absence –can be granted by your APT for hospital appointments and carer emergencies and is arranged in advance (or on the day for emergencies) by completing the form at the back of this guide.
- Compassionate leave (up to 5 days) can be authorised by your APT.
- Jury service – students need to contact the programme leader to discuss this further, explore the impact on their programme and to develop a plan of action.
- Military reserve personnel – students need to contact the programme leader to discuss this further, explore the impact on their programme and to develop a plan of action.

Making Up Practice Hours at the End of the Programme

Students are required to complete a MINIMUM of 2300 in order to register as a nurse. Third year students will have the opportunity to complete their hours at the end of the programme in their final placement. All making up of practice hours must be negotiated with the programme leader and the host placement provider who will decide whether this can be achieved in the same placement area. Students should not negotiate their own placement in which to make up time.

Social Networking

We accept that many students use this as a means of communication and appropriate use promotes positive social and working relationships, the sharing of ideas, learning and good practice. However, this should not be used as a forum to express individual personal dissatisfaction relating to clinical practice/mentors, patients/service users or academic staff/elements of the programme. Any individual deemed by the University to be using a social networking site in an inappropriate or offensive manner will be suspended pending a Professional Suitability Panel (PSP) hearing. A possible outcome resulting from this inappropriate behaviour includes dismissal from the programme (see [Professional Suitability and Professional Conduct Policy](#) and the [NMC Social Networking Guidance](#)).

Stress

Many students experience stress due to trying to balance the demands of practice and academic work whilst still having a life. Try to identify your current sources of stress and effective ways of managing them. Try to become familiar with the signs and symptoms of stress to help you to recognise if you are becoming 'stressed' and take appropriate action. Possible signs of stress include difficulty sleeping, tearfulness or aggression, loss of appetite or over-eating, difficulty concentrating and anxiety. If you feel that you are becoming 'stressed' consider:

- Talking to your mentor
- Looking at the [UWE Wellbeing Service pages](#)
- Seeking advice from the Academic in Practice via Practice Support Line hscpsl@uwe.ac.uk or 0117 32 81152

- Contacting your Academic Personal Tutor for advice
- Making a self-referral to [UWE Wellbeing Service](#)
- Speaking to your GP

Student Advisors

[Student advisors](#) can support you with a wide range of university matters and can be contacted through the Information Points. Student advisors can support students through professional suitability cases and can be contacted by emailing advice@uwe.ac.uk

Student Ambassadors

[Student Ambassadors](#) are current students who are recruited, trained and paid to support events and activities on behalf of the University such as Open Days, and Welcome weeks. If you would like to be an ambassador, you can apply by completing the [online application form](#)

Student Hardship Fund

NHS funded students are prioritised for the Student Hardship Fund which can offer a non-repayable grant of up to £1000. You can contact the Money Advice Line which is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday between 9.30 -11.30 and Wednesdays 14.00-16.00 on 0117 328 5432 or by email mafs@uwe.ac.uk

Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption and Partner Leave

Pregnant students are entitled to up to one year's maternity leave and NHS maternity bursary. Once a student reaches 20-24 weeks pregnant, they will be given a MAT B1 form by their midwife which confirms the pregnancy and ensures that they are eligible to receive an NHS maternity bursary. Students should be advised to contact the programme lead once they have their MAT B1 form so that they can make a plan for progression, discuss maternity leave and entitlements to an NHS maternity bursary. We encourage all students to take maternity leave as NHS Bursaries are now unlikely to approve any additional funding at the end of the programme to make up time missed hours. You should inform your placement that you are pregnant so that a local risk assessment can be undertaken. You are able to obtain a replacement uniform free of charge to accommodate your pregnancy.

Students whose partners are expecting a baby are entitled to up to 4 weeks maternity support leave which cannot commence until the baby is born. These 4 weeks can be taken at any point within the first year of the baby's life and can be taken separately. Students are also permitted reasonable time off study in order to enable him/her to attend antenatal appointments prescribed by a doctor, midwife or health visitor with his/her partner.

Students who are adopting a child are entitled to Adoption Support Leave.

In all cases, you should contact your programme leader. For more information, see [Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption and Partner Leave](#) web pages.

Supernumerary Status in Clinical Placement

Students have supernumerary status and are not counted as part of the clinical staffing numbers. The NMC states that "Programme providers must ensure that students are supernumerary during all practice learning. Supernumerary means that students will not, as part of their programme preparation, be contracted by any person or anybody to provide nursing care". This ensures that as a student you undertake the placement as a learning experience and are not considered part of the workforce. When supernumerary status is not upheld, this appears to have a negative impact on mentors, students and patients. If you feel this is a problem on your placement, contact the Practice Support Line or get support from the Practice Academic Team.

Supervision of Learning Days (SoLD)

Supervision of Learning Days (SoLD) are compulsory because they count towards a students' practice hours. In general, these take place fortnightly at the University. Mentors are advised of the dates in advance and students should not be rostered to work a day shift on a SoLD day or a night shift which overlaps with a SoLD day. Non-attendance will be counted as absence and the time missed will need to be made up.

Time Keeping

Good time keeping links with professional conduct, demonstrating motivation, reliability and commitment. Nursing and midwifery involves a variety of working patterns including shift work, night duty and weekends. To be and feel part of a placement team, it is essential to experience the setting fully and this includes being on time to attend shift handover, team meetings, clinical supervision and team debriefs. It also ensures you are up to date with the day to day running of the placement, any changes which may have occurred since you were last on shift and any safeguarding issues. If for any reason you are going to be late, it is courteous and professional to let someone know; in placement this should be your mentor or a representative. When you arrive, ensure a member of the team knows you have arrived for health and safety reasons and sign in where appropriate.

Timesheets

Your timesheets must be completed to accurately reflect your time in practice. You should get your timesheets signed after each shift or at least weekly by your mentor or a registered nurse who is a permanent member of staff. Bank staff and non-registered staff cannot sign your timesheets. Timesheets should be submitted promptly following each placement, please refer to

your module handbook for deadline dates. Failure to submit these will be classed as a non-submission against your practice module.

Following each placement you should submit the following:

- Separate the white copies of the timesheets, put the declaration sheet on the top and staple the sheets together
- Separate the yellow copies and staple them together with the declaration sheet on the top and attach to the assessment documents
- Ensure each copy is legible
- Ensure each page is clearly labelled with your name and student number
- Cross through errors with a single line only
- Do not use Tippex or sticky labels to cover up mistakes

You will need to attach a copy of your timesheets and declaration to any travel claims you may make, therefore it is also a good idea to keep a copy of the timesheets for your own personal record. This can be a photocopy or scanned copy or photo from a smartphone, for example.

Falsification of timesheets will be considered a breach of The Code and will be referred to Professional Suitability proceedings within the University and may result in discontinuation of studies. You may also be referred for investigation under NHS Counter Fraud procedures.

Timesheets are submitted along with the assessment documentation at the end of each placement using the guidance in the practice module handbook. The practice module team checks and verifies your documentation and timesheets and then your practice hours are recorded on ARC. If you have a query about your practice hours once recorded on ARC please contact Cliff.Woolley@uwe.ac.uk in PPO.

Travel Claims

All placement expenses claims should be submitted via the Information Points at Glenside or Gloucester. You should submit a copy of your timesheets at the same time to assist with checking dates.

Uniforms and Dress Code

UWE has a [strict uniform and dress code policy](#). All these requirements are to prevent cross infection and protect the public and yourself from injury.

- Your uniform should be clean
- Student ID badge must be clearly visible
- Black shoes, preferably lace up (No crocs or pumps)
- Long hair must be tied back and off the face
- Nails must be short and free from varnish
- No false nails or eyelashes
- Keep make up minimal
- Jewellery – a plain ring, ear studs (or ear plugs) can be worn

- Ear spacers, necklaces and hoop type earrings must not be worn
- Piercings kept to a minimum and discreet
- Tattoos should be covered where possible

When travelling to and from placement, it is preferable to travel in your own clothing, changing into uniform on arrival. If this is not possible, uniform should be completely covered and worn for the minimum amount of time outside your placement. It is a good idea to purchase a dark (e.g. blue/black) coloured full-length coat or raincoat which will completely cover your uniform whilst travelling. This is particularly useful when undertaking community-based placements. It is inadvisable to be seen in public in uniform as members of the public may mistake you for registered staff and seek assistance inappropriate to your status. Wearing your uniform in places such as shops, restaurants and bars whilst off-duty, is not only an infection control risk, it may also undermine the idea that you are safeguarding the health and wellbeing of the public. Please avoid wearing your uniform in public.

Prior to commencing each placement, it is essential that students check the expected dress code as, in some placements, it is acceptable to wear 'mufti'. Where 'mufti' clothing is permitted, this should be appropriate:

- Tee shirts bearing slogans are not appropriate
- No ripped jeans
- No provocative clothing such as short skirts, short tops, low cleavage
- Footwear should be sensible and appropriate.
- Some placements do allow training shoes; do not assume this is the case – check first

Where there are religious or cultural issues that affect adherence to the uniform policy; please seek advice from the Programme Leader prior to commencing placement.

Pregnant students are able to obtain a replacement uniform free of charge to accommodate their pregnancy.

All students should wear their uniform when attending skills sessions at UWE.

Students can purchase replacement uniforms from reception at Glenside and Gloucester campuses or [online](#) via the Students' Union.

University Health Centre

The [University Health Centre](#) based on Frenchay Campus aims to provide accessible healthcare for everyone working or studying at the University. All UWE students are able to register with the Health Centre.

Vaccinations

All students should be up to date with their routine immunisations, e.g. tetanus, diphtheria, polio and MMR. On starting a nursing or midwifery programme, all students are asked to provide details and documented evidence, where available, to show their status in respect of a number of infectious diseases and immunisations (tuberculosis, measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, varicella, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV antibodies). You may need to ask your current/previous Occupational Health Department, General Practitioner or Practice Nurse for information. You are not allowed to start practice placements until UWE Occupational Health have confirmation of your immunisation status. If you are not up to date, then you will be required to have all vaccinations before you are allowed to start placement. Failure to have the required immunisation status could be construed as unprofessional behaviour, and may result in investigation under the [Professional Suitability and Professional Conduct Policy](#)

Wellbeing Service

The [Wellbeing Service](#) offers a comprehensive array of support services to help enrolled students with their mental health and personal development needs including counselling, and mentoring. Fully intermitted students may not be supported by the Wellbeing Service and should be directed to their GP for support. Students need to self-refer by completing the [online registration form](#).

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