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Dear Practice Colleagues,

Firstly, we would like to say a huge thank you for continuing to offer and support placement experiences for our nursing and midwifery students during what has been an unprecedented and challenging period for all us working in healthcare practice and education. We wanted this communication to serve as an update regarding how we have adapted programmes at UWE Bristol for our nursing and midwifery students and to share our placement recovery plans. We are meeting regularly with our practice partners during this time to transition from paid placements which were introduced during the emergency period to placements as usual as part of our recovery plans:

- The arrangements for paid placements nationally have ended as of 31st July, students placed prior to this can remain on contractual arrangements under paid arrangements, however students' placements after this date will resume their supernumerary status and will be unpaid. We anticipate all nursing and midwifery students will resume programmes as usual from August / September 2020.
- All students accessing placements as normal with supernumerary status will require a risk assessment which will be undertaken by UWE Bristol with students, in order to identify any students who are at risk and require adjustments. The placements for these students will be planned in partnership with practice partners to establish suitable allocations and reasonable adjustments. This will be in line with processes that have been utilised by staff in practice areas during the emergency period.
- As a result of the move from programmes as usual onto paid placement pathways, we have adjusted all of our nursing and midwifery programmes in line with the NMC emergency standards, this has been a huge piece of work and during this period our academic staff have been working hard to deliver innovative teaching and learning online, whilst adapting content and assessments and supporting our students virtually.
- The reconfiguration of services and redeployment of staff during the Covid-19 emergency continues to impact on areas of capacity and we are working closely with practice partners in their placement recovery plans to ensure students can continue with their placement learning and experience the wide and diverse range of practice placements.
- As part of the NMC Recovery Standards it is not anticipated that we will resume the Standards Supporting Learning and Assessment in Practice (2008) and all programmes are required to adopt the SSSA standards (2018), which will mean all nursing and midwifery students coming out onto placements from August 2020 onwards will require a practice supervisor and assessor as opposed to mentorship under the previous standards. This may require staff to

transition/update onto the new standards more quickly than what was previously planned. Our Academics in Practice are offering transitional mentor updates virtually for those who have previously completed mentor preparation programmes, these workshops highlight the key changes for the

<https://www1.uwe.ac.uk/students/practicesupportnet/mentorupdateandtraining.aspx>

- For those staff who have not previously completed mentor preparation and would like to supervise/assess students in practice, we have the Supporting Students in Practice package available here: <https://courses.uwe.ac.uk/Z51000122/supporting-students-in-practice> which prepares staff in practice to undertake both the role of practice supervisor and practice assessor.
- Our practice facing academic staff will be supporting you and our students via email, telephone and video conferencing, as we have throughout the Covid-19 emergency. Where a practice visit is required due to the exceptional nature of the support required, we will try to facilitate this and will ensure any members of staff visiting clinical practice have been risk assessed.

Despite the huge challenges staff and students have had to overcome during the Covid-19 emergency period, students continue to evaluate placements positively, particularly in relation to how well support they have been and how they have been embraced as valued members of the workforce during this time. We anticipate that placements will continue to be a challenging area which will require innovative approaches to sustain placement experiences and we thank you for your ongoing support with this.

Professor Dave Clarke has recently joined UWE as Associate Dean for Health, Social Care and Partnerships. Dave is the strategic lead for our health and social care portfolio and he is leading engagement in the proposed School of Health and Social Care at UWE. Dave worked at Cardiff University for some years and most recently worked at the University of Leicester where he implemented the Universities first nursing programme and helped to form their new School of Healthcare Professions. Rachel Hadland, Associate Head of Department for Placements and Employability will be commencing maternity leave from 24th August and Kirsty Davis who has a background in leading the midwifery programme and working closely with practice partners will be covering this role.

With best wishes,

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