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<th>E-mail</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Days worked at University</td>
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Glossary

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<tr>
<th>Practice Placement</th>
<th>The practice area in which a student is educated for a stipulated period of time, and where professional competence is assessed.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Practice Tutor</td>
<td>The academic member of staff based at the higher education institution, who coordinates the practice education elements of the programme. This includes the development of new placements, and the education of practice educators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Academic Tutor</td>
<td>An academic member of staff who acts as a contact person for a group of students, and practice educators throughout a practice placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Placement Coordinator</td>
<td>The practice placement coordinator role normally includes the co-ordination of practice placements across a specific site/sector, liaising with the higher education institution and acting in an advisory capacity to practice educators and students as required during practice experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Educator</td>
<td>This refers to the person facilitating students’ learning whilst they are on placement. The practice educator is an occupational therapist who has completed a practice educators’ course and is familiar with the University. The practice educator is responsible for the assessed outcome on placement.</td>
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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Queen Margaret University Occupational Therapy Practice Placement Handbook.

This handbook provides an overview of the MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-reg), and BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy programmes and the processes involved in placement provision. The Handbook is intended for occupational therapy students, practice educators, and organisations hosting practice placements. Programme and placement information in the handbook includes:

- Timing of placements for the MSc and BSc(Hons) programmes
- Learning outcomes for each practice placement
- Details of the placement assessment process
- Placement procedures and guidelines

Practice–based learning is a vital and indispensable part of occupational therapy students’ learning process in their educational and professional development. Practice experience enables the acquisition of new knowledge and skills as well as the application, consolidation and reflection upon learning gained in the university environment.

The success of practice-based learning is highly dependent upon a clear and supportive interchange between occupational therapy students, practice educators, practice education host organisations, and Queen Margaret University. All documentation relating to practice placements is available via Queen Margaret University’s Practice-Based Learning Support website: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/nursing-and-allied-health-programmes-pbl-information/

On behalf of Queen Margaret University, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your involvement in this shared process. We hope that that practice-based learning will prove to be a fulfilling and rewarding experience for everyone involved.

Joanna Beveridge & Julie Caulfield
Professional Practice Tutors
Occupational Therapy pre-registration programmes
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
2. Occupational Therapy programmes: Practice placement patterns

Queen Margaret University provides two routes for eligibility to register as an Occupational Therapist with the Health and Care Professions Council:

- Two year accelerated MSc (pre-registration) route
- Four year BSc (Hons) route

2.1. MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration)

The MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration) accelerated programme aims to offer suitably qualified graduate applicants the opportunity to register as an occupational therapist with the Health and Care Professions Council within two years.

The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT 2016) requires evidence of 1000 hours of successfully completed practice placement hours prior to qualification. A combination of block and integrated models is employed enabling students to undertake a minimum of 1028 hours in practice through the completion of four practice placements. The delivery pattern for practice placements on the MSc route is depicted in the Table below.

Table 1: Practice placement delivery pattern for MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-reg)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Programme</th>
<th>Placement</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Placement Days</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>SCQF Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Practice Placement 1</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>6 weeks full time</td>
<td>30 days</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Practice Placement 2</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>6 weeks full time</td>
<td>30 days</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Practice Placement 3</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>14 weeks part time</td>
<td>42 days</td>
<td>305</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Practice Placement 4</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>8 weeks full time</td>
<td>40 days</td>
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Assessment of practice placements do not form part of the masters level assessed credits but does contribute towards the final qualification. Students are graded on placement to give them an indication of their performance. The first placement is assessed at SCQF 7, the second at SCQF 8, the third at SCQF 9, and fourth at SCQF 10.

2.2. BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy

The BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy is a four-year programme which offers the opportunity to register as an occupational therapist with the Health and Care Professions Council.
The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT 2016) requires evidence of 1000 hours of successfully completed practice placement hours prior to qualification. The programme enables students to undertake a minimum of 1010 hours in practice through the completion of four practice placements. A block model is employed with practice placements occurring in each year of the programme. The first assessed at SCQF 7, the second at SCQF 8, the third at SCQF 9, and fourth at SCQF 10. The delivery pattern for placements on the BSc(Hons) route is depicted in the Table below.

Table 2: Practice placement delivery pattern for BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Programme</th>
<th>Placement</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Placement Days</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>SCQF Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Practice Placement 1</td>
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<td>30 days</td>
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<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>6 weeks full time</td>
<td>30 days</td>
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<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Practice Placement 3</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>8 weeks full time</td>
<td>40 days</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Practice Placement 4</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>8 weeks full time</td>
<td>40 days</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3. MSc Occupational Therapy, and BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy practice placement experience.
Each practice placement module has a unique set of learning outcomes, devised by the University. These outcomes articulate with prior and future University studies and previous practice placement modules. Learning outcomes increase in complexity as the student progresses through the programme and each placement provides one of the building blocks for future ones.

Practice Placement 1 (PP1)
Practice Placement 1 offers students the first opportunity of learning in a practice setting. They are acquiring knowledge and a repertoire of skills for functioning in practice placements. Students observe, practice and reflect on their performance. They take an active role with clients, applying knowledge and developing professional reasoning skills.

The focus of Practice Placement 1 includes opportunities to:-
- gain an understanding of occupational therapy in one practice context;
- establish the foundations for safe, effective and ethical professional practice;
- establish the foundations of continuing professional development;
- establish the foundations of effective professional communication;
- initiate the development of professional skills, attitudes and values;
- reflect upon and evaluate personal performance;
• exploring how the major concepts and principles of occupational therapy relate to practice;
• gain exposure to service users with a range of health conditions and social circumstances;
• examine the relationship between occupational performance, health and well-being;
• observe and, where appropriate, participate in work in an inter professional / multi agency setting.

Practice Placement 2 (PP2)
Practice Placement 2 encourages students to draw upon and integrate knowledge from their university based studies and previous learning from Practice Placement 1. During this placement they actively contribute to the practice setting. Emphasis is on practice and experience of the occupational therapy process, problem solving and communication.

The focus of PP2 includes opportunities to:-
• experience an area of practice significantly different from that encountered in PP1;
• participate in safe and effective service delivery;
• further develop appropriate professional skills, attitudes and values;
• actively participate in inter professional and multi agency working;
• reflect on and evaluate personal performance;
• continue to evidence professional development.

Practice Placement 3 (PP3)
The third practice placement provides the students with the opportunity to broaden and consolidate their knowledge of practice. Students gain a greater degree of autonomy, adopting a co-worker role with their practice educator and assume joint responsibility for active service provision.

This placement will enable students to:-
• gain a greater degree of autonomy in the work setting;
• actively participate in all aspects of service delivery;
• demonstrate an analytical approach to all aspects of service delivery;
• explore how research findings might be integrated into practice;
• reflect on and evaluate personal performance;
• continue to reflect and build evidence of professional development.

Practice Placement 4 (PP4)
During this final placement students will be expected to demonstrate a competent level of attainment in all aspects of practice and that they have the knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate for practice now and in the future.

This placement will enable students to:-
• work as independently as possible at pre-registration level;
• assimilate and synthesis knowledge and skills prior to completion of studies;
• provide evidence of independence in all aspects of learning;
• effectively integrate research findings into practice;
• enhance the development of an analytical approach to all aspects of practice;
realistically evaluate effectiveness of interventions;
effectively contribute to multi professional and inter agency working;
reflect on and evaluate professional performance.

3. Responsibilities during practice education

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of the various individuals involved in practice education namely the student, practice educator, personal academic tutor, practice placement coordinator, professional practice tutor, pre-placement support officer, and placement administrator

3.1. Student responsibilities

Students at all times must pay cognisance to their responsibilities within practice-based learning. Failure to do so will adversely affect their placement experiences and learning and could lead to failure and, ultimately, the termination of the practice placement.

Prior to placement it is expected that the student will

- Have adequate funding arrangements in place to support attendance at practice placement.
- Purchase (at a reasonable cost to themselves) Professional Indemnity Insurance to cover practice placements.
- Monitor their student e-mail accounts and respond promptly to any enquiries from their School/Division.
- Attend all pre-placement briefings and/or participate in all mandatory preparatory activities as required by the School/Division.
- Complete an OT Student Advance Information for Practice Educators Form and forward this to the Practice Placement Co-ordinator, normally within six weeks advance of the start date of practice placement.
- Read all documentation provided by the University for practice placements including assessment requirements, procedures, and regulations.
- Read all pre-placement information provided, or recommended by host organisations.
- Revise relevant taught information, and skills in preparation for the placement.

At the start of the placement and throughout placement students must:

- Observe the Health and Care Professions Council Guidance on Conduct, and Ethics for Students (HCPC 2016), and College of Occupational Therapists Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (COT 2015a) at all times.
- Be punctual at all times, and dressed appropriately for the placement setting and the work involved.
- Reflect the status of a team member and respectfully engage with other members of staff at the placement setting as appropriate.
- Discuss, and develop a negotiated Learning Agreement with the practice educator
- Plan a programme of experience with the practice educator which takes into account placement opportunities, and the above.
• Contact their personal academic tutor at the earliest opportunity if any significant matters arise during the practice placement, including any areas of concern relating to their own welfare and personal safety, or well-being.
• Report any health and safety concerns that have not been addressed by the placement provider to the University, including safety or well-being of service users, or carers.
• Contact the University if circumstances of their placement changes such as placement site, and/or duties, and/or practice educator.
• Abide by the rules and regulations regarding health and safety and other working practices and procedures of the placement provider.
• At all times, follow the procedures of the placement setting, and Queen Margaret University regarding absence and sickness.
• Be fully prepared for supervision sessions and contribute to the supervision process in a critically reflective and professional manner.
• Contribute towards and actively participate in the midway review, and final evaluation of their performance displaying openness to, respect and acknowledgement of other people’s ideas.
• Take part in all Hub placement tasks organised by the University.
• Reflect on the placement experience enabling personal and professional development. Complete selected items of evidence to add to their Continuing Professional Development Portfolio and review these with practice educators where relevant.

At the end of the placement students must:
• Complete the Student Evaluation of Placement Form and share this with practice educators, ensuring the practice educator has time to discuss any points as necessary.
• Turn in original signed copies of the Practice Placement Assessment Form, and Student Evaluation of Placement Form to the University School Office within 5 working days of completion of placement.
• Complete the Placement Resumé Form and add this to their portfolio.

3.2. Practice Educator responsibilities
Practice Educators (PE) play a key role in the professional development of occupational therapy students. Practice educators are experienced occupational therapists who are responsible for the assessed outcome on placements.

Prior to the placement starting, the practice educator
• Undertakes appropriate practice educator training.
• Reviews the occupational therapy sections of the University’s Practice-based Learning Support web site for additional information and support http://www.qmu.ac.uk/PBL/
• Utilises information from the OT Student Advance Information for Practice Educators Form to anticipate the varied learning requirements of students, for example because of a declared disability or specific cultural background.
• Provides pre-placement information for students in advance of the start of the placement. This includes an overview of the service, clear directions and travel information, recommended pre-placement reading, and any other information considered helpful.
• Prepares an induction for the student’s first day.
• Formulates the outline of an appropriate student diary/placement plan to be added to and developed during the placement.

**At the start of the placement and throughout the practice educator**

• Meets and carries out an induction with the student, including:
  - A student identity check;
  - Review content of student’s Practice Education Passport;
  - Location of appropriate literature such as policies, books etc;
  - Tour of practice facilities and location of lockers, library etc;
  - Emergency procedures and policies in the event of fire, cardiac arrest etc;
  - Contact details in the event of an emergency and reporting sickness absence.
• Ensures student has practice educator’s contact number(s).
• Ensures student always has a named member of the multidisciplinary team to refer to.
• Collaborates with the student to develop a programme which reflects his/her learning needs as identified in the negotiated learning agreement and identify learning opportunities in the practice setting.
• Plans a programme of experience which takes into account placement opportunities, and the above.
• Schedules formal supervision with the student. This must be documented in supervision notes and stored appropriately.
• Plans dates and times for the midway and final reports with the student, ensuring these are given to the student at the appropriate time. Inform the University Professional Practice Tutor if the student is achieving the equivalent of an A/A* standard performance at either the midway, or final evaluation.
• Monitors the student’s attendance throughout the placement. Signs off on a weekly basis time cards verifying number of hours completed by the student during each practice placement.
• Informs the University immediately if the student has an authorised or unexpected absence from placement which lasts for more than 48 hours.
• Inform the student’s personal academic tutor as soon as possible if any concerns arise regarding the student’s well being, behaviour and/or quality of performance over all.
• Uses feedback in the Student Evaluation of Placement Form as an integral part of a constructive evaluation process.

**3.3. Personal Academic Tutor responsibilities**
The Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) is an occupational therapy lecturer from the University who acts as a first point of contact for an identified group of students, and practice educators during a practice placement.

**Key responsibilities**

• Offering support throughout the placement, responding to initial requests for advice and support from practice educators and their students, normally within 24 hours (PAT’s working days).
• Negotiating an appropriate plan of action, and subsequent contact with the practice educator and student if there are significant concerns pertaining to the quality of the student’s performance, well-being, and/or professional behaviour.
• Maintaining accurate records of the nature and time of all contacts with the student, practice educator, and host organisation using the Link Lecturer Report Form.
• Alerting the Professional Practice Tutor, and Programme Leader to any concerns arising about a student’s well-being, professional behaviour, or performance during a practice placement.

3.4. Practice Placement Co-ordinator responsibilities
The Practice Placement Coordinator (PPC) plays an essential role in fostering a culture whereby practice placements are seen as a positive activity contributing towards staff continuing professional development, and recruitment within the service.

Practice placement coordinators’ responsibilities include
• Collaborating with the University to identify new placement opportunities alongside new service delivery developments.
• Coordinating the returns for University requests for placement offers where possible, within the timescale identified.
• Bringing to the attention of the University as soon as possible potential difficulties arising which may result in the cancellation of a placement.
• Coordinating responses to students’ Advance Notification for Practice Educators Form
• Arranging if required, a further Protection of Vulnerable Groups check in addition to that which will have already been requested and obtained by Queen Margaret University.
• Ensuring staff acting in their capacity as practice educators have adequate training, and demonstrate ongoing commitment to their professional role.
• Offering support to practice educators taking into account the time and resources necessary for student supervision.
• Bringing to the attention of the University any issues creating difficulty on placement which may not be reported by the practice educator, or student.
• Taking cognisance of comments made in each Student Evaluation of Placement Form using these as an integral part of a constructive evaluation process.
• Attending and participating in meetings, workshops and other events associated with practice-based learning.

3.5 Professional Practice Tutor responsibilities
The Professional Practice Tutor (PPT) is responsible for the coordination, development and review of practice education within the framework of the occupational therapy (pre-registration) curricula. The Professional Practice Tutor’s responsibilities include:
Practice placement governance and development

- Collaborating with host placement providers to ensure that academic, regulatory, and professional bodies’ standards relating to practice-based learning are effectively and consistently implemented.
- Engaging with local, regional, national, and, where appropriate, international networks to promote and facilitate the continuing sustainability of practice education within the occupational therapy (pre-registration) curricula, and also the broader profile of allied health profession programmes offered by the School of Health Sciences, Queen Margaret University.

Practice educator preparation

- Contributing towards the organisation, and delivery of the School of Health Sciences annual programme of inter-professional education and training events for experienced, and new practice educators.

Student preparation

- Planning comprehensive, diverse practice placement profiles for each pre-registration occupational therapy student.
- Monitoring and assessing student engagement with the specified components of Practice Education Passport required for each practice placement.
- Working with disabled students to explore reasonable adjustments/accommodations recommended in Individual Learning Plans, including ways of sharing this information, where appropriate, with host placement organisations, and practice educators.
- Organisation and delivery of workshops on student responsibilities during practice placements including strategies for assuming responsibility for own learning.

Coordinating University contact and support mechanisms for all practice-based learning stakeholders

- Planning and implementing a range of mechanisms for the distribution and cascading of practice education information and documentation to host organisations, Practice Placement coordinators, Practice Educators, Personal Academic Tutors, and students.
- Bringing to the attention of the Programme Leader any concerns arising about a student’s well-being, behaviour, or performance during a practice placement.

Quality assurance

- Reviewing each student’s progress and placement grade as assessed and recommended by practice educators. This includes moderating equivalent of A/A* standard performances at the midway, and/or final assessment.
- Fielding and responding to any complaints from students, Practice Educators, and host organisations about practice placements/practice-based learning.
- Participating in and taking cognisance of feedback from all stakeholders in practice-based learning using this as an integral part of a continuous improvement process.
3.6 Placement administrator responsibilities

- Forwarding placement offers request forms to the occupational therapy practice placement coordinators’ network on an annual basis.
- Co-ordinates and collates all returned placement offers forms.
- Liaising with network members directly requesting additional placement offers if there is a shortfall of placement offers.
- Collating and distributing practice placement documentation packs to students.
- Fielding queries about administrative aspects of practice–based learning.
- Collating all placement assessment paper work returned by students to the University.

3.7 Pre-placement support officer responsibilities

- Checking and countersigning Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme Record membership applications (ensuring that all have been received prior to commencing placement).
- Organising and co-ordination of Health Clearance Appointments prior to students commencing placement.
- Ensuring that all allied health professions students have purchased Professional Indemnity Insurance prior to commencing placement.
- Organising provision of name badges and NHS Scotland Uniforms to students.
- Collating the data for the Practice Placement Agreement weeks offered (within NHS Scotland) and providing this to NHS Education for Scotland (NES).
- Provide secretarial support to the Health Science Practice Placement Committee.

4. Organisation of practice placements

4.1 Allocation of practice placements

In January each year, the Placement Administrator forwards placement request forms to the Practice Placement Co-ordinators’ Network requesting placements offers for practice-based learning modules for the next academic year. These forms are forwarded electronically to the network and returned to the University in the same way by the end of March. Offers received are collated by placement block and entered onto the occupational therapy placement offers database by the Placement Administrator. If there is a shortfall of offers, the University will telephone network members directly requesting additional placements.

Students are not permitted to organise their own practice placements. There is a placement allocation process. Students complete a practice placement planning form and upload this to an electronic drop box in the Hub. Although individual student needs are taken into consideration, this does not mean that all needs/requests can be accommodated. Placement availability is dynamic and complex, moreover services are changing dramatically, and as such it is impossible to predict the exact provision of placements that will be available throughout the programme. Students can only be allocated to placements that exist.
The allocation of placement offers is normally completed 12 weeks before the start date of each placement, and displayed in the Hub. Allocations for the first post graduate practice placement are normally completed eight weeks prior to the placement start date. The Practice Placement Coordinators’ network is notified by e-mail/post when allocations have been completed for each practice placement module.

All placements are allocated to students by the Professional Practice Tutor with due regard to the Subject Area Practice Placement Allocation Process.

Guiding principles
- Fairness and appropriateness to each student/cohort in the allocation process
- Ensuring that every student has a well rounded, and balanced practice placement profile at the point of applying for registration to the regulatory body, the Health and Care Professions Council
- Individual learning needs including health-related, and disability issues
- Student’s profile/additional information
- Previous placement experience/location
- Extenuating special circumstances
- Capacity of practice area
- Student’s term time, or home address
- Placement availability

Students would not be placed in a service where a conflict of interest in relation to assessment of their performance is identified. The responsibility is with the student to bring their circumstances to the attention of the Professional Practice Tutor prior to the allocation of placements.

Once a specific placement is allocated then this becomes part of the curriculum offered to the student. Any unreasonable refusal of a placement may be deemed as refusing the curriculum offered. Students do not have the right to contest their placement allocations on the grounds of, for example, time, travel, or financial resources.

4.2. Allocation of practice placements to students with religious and/or cultural observances
A student’s identity, such as their religious/ cultural practices can have a significant impact on teaching, learning and assessment in practice. However, it is a statutory requirement that the University and placement providers address these through establishing relevant policies and guidance which address diversity and inclusion (Scottish Parliament 2012; Great Britain Parliament 2010).

These policies include a commitment to:-
- promoting equal opportunity and diversity during employment;
- ensuring all employees are treated fairly and valued equally;
- valuing religious and cultural needs and practices, and meeting these where possible.
Students may have particular religious or cultural needs in terms of requests which may appear to “conflict” with existing working requirements in the practice setting. Such issues may include:

- health and safety issues relating to dress code;
- request for flexible working related to religious/belief-related festivals;
- adjustments for prayer time, and space.

Whilst it may not always be possible to accommodate every student’s religious or cultural observance, every effort will be made to find a mutually agreeable solution.

Guiding principles

- Normally, students will be allocated placements according to their learning needs, unless there is some exceptional reason, which would impact adversely on the student or placement.
- In these exceptional circumstances, negotiation between the student, the University, and placement provider is essential.
- Established policies that apply to employed staff also apply to students accepted on placement. It is vital that discussion takes place on the religious and cultural needs of the student and how they will be valued and/or met whilst on placement.
- Agreements between the student and placement provider may occur prior to, or at the outset of any placement as part of the induction process. These should be reviewed and discussed with the student at the midway point of the placement.

4.3. Allocation of practice placements to disabled students

Queen Margaret University is committed to equality of opportunity and believes in a culture of diversity and inclusion (QMU 2014b). Disabled students should experience the same broad range of practice settings as non-disabled students to enable them to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes for each placement. In this respect a physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments, mental illness or mental health issues, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy.

Disabled students are actively encouraged to meet with the Professional Practice Tutor to discuss their Individual Learning Plan agreed with the University Disability Adviser including any necessary support or adjustments which may be necessary to enable them to meet the learning outcomes of each practice placement. Normally, requests for a meeting are initiated through submission of an annual self declaration of Fitness to Practise Form to the Practice Education Area in the Hub.

Practice education involves a range of relationships, rights and responsibilities, some legal, and others negotiable between the student, University, and placement provider. The University acknowledges that not all information about a student’s disability or health may be relevant to placement providers and that normally, information would be provided on a need to know basis.

Reasonable adjustments during practice placements are dependent on students disclosing a disability or health condition, or at least, sharing information about their
needs with the placement provider via the OT Student Advance Information for Practice Educators Form. Moreover provision of this information enables the University to liaise with placement providers, and arrange any necessary support or adjustments that students need to enable fulfillment of the learning outcomes of the placement.

Students should keep their Personal Academic Tutor, or Programme Leader, and Practice Educator informed of any changes to their health status. The University will seek to put in place measures to support disabled students so far as is reasonably practical. It is essential that students discuss any concerns they may have with staff as early as possible.

4.4. Practice placement locations
Practice placements are located throughout mainland Scotland, including some of the island areas. Students complete placements in services where Practice Placement Agreements have been established and formalised between the University and placement providers.

Due to the wide geographical dispersal of placements, it is expected that every student will complete placements involving significant daily travel to, and from placement sites (normally, 1½ hours travel time each way), and/or moving into temporary accommodation.

It is acknowledged that some students may have particular needs which in some instances can only be supported by the student undertaking their practice placement(s) in a specific location. This may apply to:-

- Students with young/school age children, or with other family responsibilities e.g. sole carer of a disabled relative;
- A disabled student as defined by the Equality Act (2010) who requires a placement within daily travelling distance. This will be specified in their Individual Learning Plan agreed with the Queen Margaret University Disability Adviser.

In such circumstances, normally, the placement allocation is based on the principles of approximately no more than 80 miles daily travelling from permanent home, or term time address dependent on individual circumstances, and placement availability.

There may be opportunities for students to undertake placements in Europe with partners whom the Division has developed Erasmus + Exchange Agreements. This opportunity is subject to a robust selection process involving the Professional Practice Tutor, Programme Leader and where appropriate, Erasmus + Exchange Co-ordinator.

4.5. Practice placement experiences
Each practice placement experience encompasses working with people who are experiencing different occupational issues.
Experiences typically include working with:

- People of different ages across the life course;
- Individuals, or groups, and communities from different socio-economic, and cultural perspectives;
- People who have recently acquired, and/or long standing occupational needs;
- People living with health conditions affecting different aspects of physical, and psychosocial functioning;
- Marginalised individuals, or groups and communities (e.g. people seeking asylum, homeless individuals).

Students develop skills in effective service delivery within inter-professional, multi-agency contexts. This may include both established and emerging services within the public, independent, and third sectors.

Each student undertakes placements in a diverse range of settings providing them with appropriate educational experiences in preparation for the realities of contemporary and future practice. Specific settings can include but are not limited to community-based services; (e.g. intermediate care teams, primary care teams, community rehabilitation teams, reablement services); resource centres; care homes; schools and further education colleges; workplace; third sector and hospital environments (e.g. inpatient services, outpatient services, inreach/outreach services).

Students forward their OT Student Advance Information for Practice Educators Form and introductory e-mail to the relevant practice placement coordinator or specific placement site at least six weeks prior to the start date of the placement. As much notice as possible is requested from the host site if a placement offer has to be cancelled in order that an alternative placement may be found for the student. The cancellation process from the PPA’s should be followed for NHS placements.

4.6. Change to practice placement after allocation

Placement allocations are non-negotiable. A change of placement allocation is not a commonly occurring event and is avoided. Students do not have the right to exchange allocated placement with their peers. Normally, the programme teams do not enter into third party communications about allocated placements. The responsibility lies with the student to raise reasonable and relevant concerns directly with the Professional Practice Tutor.

Personal preference is not considered a valid reason to request a change in placement. All allocated placements are deemed relevant and will offer appropriate learning experiences.

Financial hardship is not considered a valid reason to change a placement. Students should consider the cost of practice placements as being a necessary and integral part of the programme and plan for this in advance.

Students may only request a change in placement allocation for extenuating circumstances not identified on the initial practice placement planning form, e.g. changes to health or well-being requiring reasonable adjustments, significant
personal issues such as bereavement related to the type of placement. Relevant supporting evidence must be provided to the Professional Practice Tutor (e.g. medical certificate) before any such request can be considered. Evidence that is subsequently proven to be false is brought to the attention of the Programme Leader.

Requesting a change to a practice placement allocation does not guarantee that it can be made.

4.7. Practice placement travel and accommodation expenses
If the placement is away from the student’s home area and/or term time address and too far for daily travel students will need to stay away during the placement. There is no direct provision by Queen Margaret University for accommodation whilst on placement; students are expected to arrange temporary accommodation for the duration of their placements using the information resources provided in the Practice Education Area in the Hub.

Students should consider the cost of practice placements as being a necessary and integral element of the programme and plan for this in advance. Undergraduate students may be eligible to claim back placement expenses either for additional accommodation or travel from the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS). There is no direct financial remuneration available to post graduate students for the funding of travelling, or accommodation costs associated with placements.

- Undergraduate students who are in receipt of an award from SAAS may be able to claim back for placement travel and accommodation costs from SAAS. Students should retain all receipts and submit these to SAAS. Claims are subject to the travel element already included in the Standard Maintenance Allowance. Further information is available from the SAAS website: [http://www.saas.gov.uk/index.htm](http://www.saas.gov.uk/index.htm)

- International undergraduate students and self funding undergraduate students are not eligible to claim for expenses from SAAS.

The University Student Finance Service administers two discretionary funds provided by the Scottish Government. These are the Childcare Fund which is aimed at students who incur childcare costs whilst studying and the Hardship Fund when students find themselves facing exceptional financial problems.

The International Fund is provided by the University and students from outwith the United Kingdom should apply to this fund.

An application form is completed and submitted with supporting evidence which is then considered at a confidential monthly meeting of the Hardship Committee. It is useful to make an appointment to see the Student Finance Adviser before submitting an application.

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<th>Student Finance Adviser</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Bill Stronach at <a href="mailto:studentfunding@qmu.ac.uk">studentfunding@qmu.ac.uk</a></td>
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</table>
4.8. Practice placement hours
In order to meet standards established and monitored by professional bodies, it should be noted that by the end of Practice Placement 4 every student is required to have successfully completed a minimum of 1000 hours of practice education (COT, 2014a; WFOT, 2016).

Students are expected to work the same hours as their practice educators and these may vary between services, e.g. 8.30 am-4.30 pm, or 8.00 am-4.00 pm, or 9.00 am-5.00 pm.

Some services operate over seven working days and therefore placement may involve evening, and weekend attendance. Students should not assume they will be on placement Mondays–Fridays, daytime attendance only.

Absence of a written record of the appropriate number of hours may result in a student having to complete extra placement hours prior to graduation. If difficulties arise with placement hours, practice educators, and students are actively encouraged draw this to the attention of the University so that a mutually acceptable plan of action can be developed.

Every student has an individual practice placement profile logged by the Practice Placement Administrator to denote accumulated practice placement hours, and placement experiences across the course of their education. Each student’s practice placement hours is verified by the Professional Practice Tutor at the culmination of the programme to confirm eligibility for award.

4.9. Practice placement study time
A requirement of the programmes is that each student is allocated a half day of personal study per week (4 hours) for the full-time practice placements at a time agreed with the practice educator. Study time is included in the overall placement hours.

4.10. Working relationship between student and practice educators
Students work closely with their practice educators during practice placements. It is important to remember that practice educators’ first responsibilities are to service users and that in addition to facilitating students’ learning they have many additional responsibilities to deal with on a day-to-day basis. Giving consideration and thought to practice educators’ responsibilities should enable the establishment of an effective working relationship. Students are advised to put the safety and well-being of service-users before personal concerns, for example practice placement grades, other work related to their programme of study, employment prospects, or other personal gain (HCPC 2016).

Practice educators collaborate with students to identify how the University learning outcomes for each practice placement will be achieved and help the student to determine a clear pathway for achieving these through the development of a Learning Agreement.

In addition to ongoing informal supervision from the practice educator, normally,
students receive a weekly formal supervision session for full time placements, and a fortnightly formal supervision session for part-time placements. If these sessions are not forthcoming from the practice educator, then the student should request these from the practice educator.

Practice educators assess students performance on placement using the University grade descriptors for undergraduate programmes (QMU 2015b). Students must have realistic expectations about their performance during practice placement, and acknowledge that practice educators are responsible for the assessed outcome. The A* grade indicates an excellent performance and therefore is not the norm. It is unrealistic for all students to expect that they will always achieve top grades. As a result the C grade is identified as a good performance and therefore the A* grade is for an outstanding performance.

4.11. Models of supervision during practice placements
A variety of supervision models – both well established, and innovative/developing approaches - are deployed throughout practice placements. These variations enable a flexible, sustainable and responsive approach to the organisation of practice education, enabling the Subject Area to meet student requirements, whilst also in some cases addressing community needs. These include:

Apprenticeship model (1:1)
One student per practice educator (occupational therapist). The practice educator structures the student learning experiences and provides direct supervision and role-modelling to the student throughout the course of their placement. The degree of supervision and the amount of responsibility given to the student may vary, depending on the practice setting.

Peer assisted learning model (2:1)
One practice educator (occupational therapist) supervises two or more students. Here the emphasis is on peer and self-directed learning where the students support each other and work together. The practice educator acts as a resource, providing guidance to the student, monitoring performance and providing opportunity for the students to take increasing responsibility with service users. Benefits of this model include development of team-work skills, increased problem-solving skills and a sense of shared-ownership of the learning experience.

Team Model (1:2, 1:3, 1:4)
In this model, the education of a student may be shared between two or more members of a team (occupational therapists) within a workplace. Combinations might include an experienced practice educator and a new practice educator; two practice educators from different organisations and the placement being structured around the service user journey for example, from primary to secondary care This model may be an attractive option for practitioners who work part-time, or if the practitioner’s caseload is coupled with management responsibilities.

Project focussed model
In project-focused models (Fortune & McKinstry 2015; Fortune et al. 2006), students work on projects or undertake a key role in developmental aspect of project
work related to prevention, health promotion, supported self management, or service development activities that could be applied at a group, or community level. The project – focussed model can use alternate supervision models including face-face supervision, or long armed professional supervision from an occupational therapist. Students may work in pairs during these placements afford opportunities to realise the benefits of peer assisted learning

**Colloborative model**

This model is currently being developed by the Subject Area and is influenced by global drivers to prepare students for occupation-focussed, community-centred practice (Hyett et al. 2015). It acknowledges that all people have the right to participate in occupation (Kronenberg et al. 2011) and recognises the need for occupational therapists to use enablement approaches with communities (Kirsh 2015; Polatajko et al. 2015; Townsend et al. 2013). In the collaborative model the community is viewed as the client and an entity for collaboration, not simply the setting. Emphasis is placed upon using enablement skills including advocacy, teaching, collaboration, consultation and education to co-implement and achieve the goals, and occupational outcomes that are identified by the communities themselves. Many, user-led organisations may provide rich and unique learning experiences with potential for exploration of these concepts.

Throughout the placement an on-site mentor at the host service supports the student. Long armed professional supervision is provided by an occupational therapist, which may be on a face-face basis, by long distance via telephone, and/or digital technologies.

4.12. **Learning agreement**

For each practice placement students prepare a Learning Agreement in collaboration with their practice educator(s). The Learning Agreement acts as the keystone where student and practice educator(s) both agree what is to be learned, how the student is going to demonstrate their learning, how the student’s learning is to be assessed and the timescale. It encourages shared commitment in the learning process as well as providing a focus for weekly formal supervision time. The Learning Agreement is reviewed during supervision, when learning outcomes are evaluated and specific learning goals, in relation to the core skills of occupational therapy, are identified for the coming week. Thus there is shared responsibility for the learning experience as students work in partnership with their practice educator(s) to try to secure a successful outcome.

**Important!**

Learning Agreements are the keystone for student-centred learning throughout each practice placement. The Subject Area respectfully requests that placement providers/practice educators refrain from giving pre-determined weekly placement objectives to students.

4.13. **Reflective diary**

Students use reflective diaries as part of the process of learning and reflection and in preparation for supervision sessions with their practice educator(s). The diary in part,
focuses on specific aspects of practice and students use it to plan and prepare for work.

4.14. Practice placement portfolio
As part of their professional development students compile a practice placement portfolio during placements using a proforma developed by the programme team. The use of portfolios gives students opportunities to evidence and reflect upon their learning. This process prepares students for using portfolios to evidence their continuing professional development after completion of their studies (COT 2014b; HCPC 2012c)

4.15. Complaints handing procedure
The University has implemented a Complaints Handling Procedure (QMU 2013a) which can be found here:
https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/6651/qmu-complaints-procedure.pdf
The Procedure has three stages: frontline resolution, investigation and external review.

If a student has a complaint they should discuss this with someone in the area which the student wishes to complain about (for example, for a complaint relating to a practice placement, this should be discussed with the Programme Leader or Professional Practice Tutor for the practice placement module concerned).

The complaint will be considered under frontline resolution (unless complex) and a response will usually be given within 5 working days. If the complaint is complicated, it is the student’s choice to take it to investigation stage immediately or it may be referred to the investigation stage by the person the student determined to discuss the complaint with at frontline resolution. Should the complaint be considered under the investigation stage, a response will normally be received within 20 working days.

Any queries about the complaints procedure or any complaints written on the Complaints Form may be e-mailed to complaints@qmu.ac.uk

5. Checking student Identity and attendance monitoring throughout practice placement
We require student identity to be checked at the commencement of any practice placement and attendance to be formally monitored.

5.1. Identity checking
Student identity must be confirmed at the start of each practice placement. To do this students are advised to bring their Student Matriculation Card, which shows the photograph and name of the student, with them on placement and they must show this to the practice educator(s) responsible for facilitating the placement.

In the unlikely event that the student’s identity cannot be confirmed from their matriculation card, alternative official photo ID (i.e. passport, or driving licence) can be used to confirm identity. If the student’s identity cannot be confirmed the Practice Educator must contact the Professional Practice Tutor at the University.
Once the matriculation card has been checked and the student’s identity confirmed the practice educator should sign the declaration at the end of the practice placement assessment report form. The final placement report should be returned to the University in line with normal practice outlined in Section 17 of this handbook.

5.2. Attendance monitoring
Every student is required to inform their practice placement site and the University should they be unable to attend their placement on any given day.

In the event that a student has an authorised or unexpected absence from placement which lasts for more than 48 hours we ask that the practice educator informs Pamela Knox, Placement Administrator, School of Health Sciences of this absence immediately. E-mail: otpplacement@qmu.ac.uk Tel: 0131-474-0000 then follow voice automated instructions.

Attendance must be monitored throughout the placement and all absences from placement must be recorded by practice educator(s) in the appropriate sections of the Time Cards and Assessment Report Form.

5.3. Student absences from placement
The University is aware that many students now find it essential to find work whilst studying. However, employment outside of the programme must not adversely affect student’s work during practice placement. Students are expected to mirror their working patterns to those in operation at the placement site. They must recognise that flexibility on the part of the host organisation is not to be expected.

Similarly, all requests for pre-arranged absence from placement must be discussed with the University. Planned absences from practice placement may be approved by the University in exceptional circumstances only.

Important!

Students do not have the right to negotiate holidays, or other leaves of absence during a placement directly with their Practice Educators.

Students are expected to comply with the attendance, and reporting sickness policies of the placement host organisation and must familiarise themselves with these policies within the first week of placement. If absence is before start of a placement the student must contact the Practice Educator to report any sickness or absence.

If a student is absent from placement for 3 working days or more, it is essential that they liaise with their Personal Academic Tutor so that the impact on the achievement of the University learning outcomes for the placement can be assessed.

Absences from placement for 5 working days or more must be supported by a medical certificate and forwarded to the Professional Practice Tutor at the University.
Important!

Failure by students to inform the practice educator, and the University that they are not attending placement will be regarded as unprofessional behaviour.

5.3. Student withdrawal/ removal from practice placement

If a student chooses to withdraw from a placement without prior discussion with the Practice Educator, and approval of the University, normally, the student is deemed to have failed the practice placement module. However if extenuating circumstances occur which preclude prior discussion (such as serious illness, or a sudden family bereavement) then a course of action will be mutually agreed.

There may be occasions when Practice Educator(s) deem it appropriate to remove a student from the placement area immediately, and they have the authority to do so. While, on these rare occasions, the placement site will report the matter at its earliest convenience to the University, the student is also required to inform their Personal Academic Tutor immediately any such event occurs.

6. Preparing students for practice placements

Approaches to assist students to prepare for placements are blended to allow flexibility of delivery and to accommodate for different learning styles. These include interactive workshops, group work, personal development planning, self-evaluation activities, directed reading, and e-learning. Key aspects of the preparation process are described in more detail below.

6.1. Hub

All of the practice placement modules are supported by a designated Occupational Therapy Combined Practice Education Area in the University’s virtual learning environment – The Hub. Through this medium students are given clear time frames and deadlines for completion of preparatory tasks, and activities associated with practice placements.

6.2. Practice Education Passport

The Practice Education Passport is assessed on a pass/fail basis by the Professional Practice Tutor to verify that every student has completed all of the mandatory preparation tasks, and training before being permitted to go on placement. Students are taught via practical workshops, discussion groups, seminars, e-learning packages, and other independent study. Every student is required to upload, to their PE Passport workbook in ePortfolio, documents, certificates, and maintain records of having completed all of the required tasks/activities in preparation for progression to placement. It is the student’s responsibility to present the evidence in the Passport to the Practice Educator during the induction phase of placement.
6.3. Protection of Vulnerable Groups scheme
As students will be doing regulated work with children, and protected adults during practice placements, they must apply to register with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG). It is the responsibility of each student to fill in the detailed application form provide the necessary documentation and to pay for this to be carried out prior to the first practice placement. The University Pre-Placement Support Officer checks and countersigns all PVG membership applications, and ensures that these have been received prior to commencing placement.

Some placements providers require additional checks before accepting students on placements and make this known to the University when making placement offers. Further information on the PVG Scheme is available at: https://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/disclosureinformation/pvgscheme.htm

**Important!**

Failure to have a Protection of Vulnerable Groups Certificate in place will result in the deferral of a practice placement.

6.4. Health clearance checks
In 2008 the Scottish Government agreed all new health care workers who have direct contact with patients must undergo a Standard Health Clearance Check before they take up post or in the case of students in the School of Health Sciences before they are permitted to go on placement (Scottish Government, 2008).

Health Clearance Checks take place on site at the QMU campus. Students are assessed and screened for Tuberculosis (TB), Hepatitis B and Mumps, Measles and Rubella (MMR). Initial Health Clearance Checks and any subsequent follow-up appointments are co-ordinated by the University Pre-placement Support Officer. Attendance at the Health Clearance Check is compulsory and the cost may need to be covered by the student. The University’s policy on Health Clearance Check is reviewed annually.

**Important!**

Every student must attend their initial Health Clearance Check appointment in order to progress to practice placement.

6.5. Professional indemnity insurance
Due to professional requirements students on Nursing, Allied Health Profession and Healthcare Science qualifying programmes are required to hold professional indemnity insurance as a pre-condition of progressing to placement. This is most easily gained through the joining of the appropriate professional body, and information on this is provided during the induction process into the programme. The University Pre-Placement Support Officer maintains a database to ensure that every student has purchased Professional Indemnity Insurance and the Insurance Policy is active for each practice placement.
Important!

Failure to have an active Professional Indemnity Insurance Policy in place will result in the deferral of a practice placement.

6.6. Insurance cover for motor vehicle use during practice placement
Students using their own motor vehicle during practice placement will be expected to obtain confirmation from their insurers that adequate cost cover is in place for all costs and claims and no liability is placed on the University and/or placement provider. The vehicle must be in a roadworthy condition with valid road tax and MOT (if applicable) A copy of the insurance policy certificate must be retained in the Practice Education Passport for inspection. Under no circumstance should students carry service users, service user family members, or carers in their own vehicle.

6.7. Insurance cover for overseas placements
Where a student has to travel overseas on placement, the University has in place travel insurance, and the student should notify the Finance Office that they are going on placement, where and when and obtain Insurance Policy Number and Emergency Contact Information.

6.8. Dress code/uniforms and name badges
The official National Health Service (NHS) uniform is issued to all students by the Scottish Government prior to their first practice placement. The Pre-placement Support Officer co-ordinates the arrangements for the fitting for uniforms and provision of name badges. These processes are initiated during induction week.

Students are expected to conform to policy agreed within individual service settings. Practice educators will make these requirements known to students in advance of starting the placement. Some practice placement sites may require a uniform whereas in other settings smart, casual dress is the norm.

Students are referred to the NHS Scotland Dress Code (2010) and advised to dress professionally and for ease of movement wear comfortable clothing. This can be found at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0039/00398324.pdf.

In settings where name badges are worn, these must be visible at all times; some settings may also require an additional security pass.

Uniforms if worn during placement must be clean and changed on a daily basis. Cardigans and sweatshirts worn for warmth should suit the colour of the uniform and these should be removed when working with service users. Footwear must be clean and in good repair, low heeled, closed toed rubber soled, non-pervious shoes are recommended. Black or navy shoes are preferable, however in some settings clean trainers of a non-pervious material are permissible. Socks should be plain in keeping with the colour of the uniform.

Where uniform is not required students are expected to consider the impact of their
presentation on the service user. Dressing in a neutral/modest way is less likely to provoke a reaction. Logos and words on clothing may be fashionable but inappropriate as they may have adverse connotations. Similarly clothes should not be too revealing (whatever the gender of the student) i.e. too tight, too short revealing parts of the body area. Underwear should not be visible either through clothing or because outer clothing does not cover underwear adequately.

When a scarf or a veil is worn, students should ensure that the flow of the garment promotes effective communication and safe moving and handling. Scarves or veils should be changed on a daily basis.

Most placement sites will have a strict policy regarding the wearing of jewellery. This again is for students’ safety as well as that of service users. Policies allow for religious/cultural observance - a ring (plain band) a bangle (plain) or a necklace worn next to the skin is allowed. Normally, one metal smooth studded earring per lobe is permitted. Body piercings and tattoos may cause concerns in some placement settings and consequently may need to be removed or covered up.

Watches are permissible however these may need to be removed throughout the course of the day.

Hair falling over the face during practical work is not acceptable and would require appropriate action. Hair should be tied back off the collar and nails kept clean and short. Nail polish, artificial finger nails or nail extensions should not be worn within the placement setting.

In many instances students will be working in close proximity to service users therefore personal hygiene is an important consideration.

A student whose personal appearance is deemed to be inappropriate by the practice educator or most senior member of staff present in the practice area may be asked to leave the practice setting and reported absent until they return dressed appropriately. Placement hours may be deducted for this absence.

Students are expected to be mindful of personal safety, infection control, and being a representative of the University and professional programme they are undertaking in addition to any placement provider policies and guidelines.

6.9. Promoting a safe working environment
Every student must complete mandatory education and training upon a range of health and safety issues before the first practice placement begins, including:

- Adult Protection
- Basic life support
- Child Protection
- De-escalation principles
- Information governance, and informed consent
- Manual handling
Selected elements of the Scottish Infection Control and Prevention Educational Pathway (SIPCEP) Web link: https://community.learnprouk.com/

6.10. Preparation for placement workshops
Interactive workshops held at the University enable students to prepare for each practice placement. Workshops are facilitated by the Professional Practice Tutor and focus upon topics salient to each practice placement such as:

- Review of the University learning outcomes for each placement, and exploration of how these will facilitate the integration of theory and practice;
- Professional conduct during practice placements;
- Learning styles and the learning cycle;
- Professional, and clinical reasoning;
- Reviewing Assessment Form for each placement;
- Preparation for, and review of self-evaluation on placements;
- Developing and using Learning Agreements during practice placements;
- Developing, and using a professional development portfolio.

To complement the face-face pre-placement workshops, students complete an interactive on-line programme of study – Preceptor Education Programme (PEP) for Health Professionals and Students. Each module (eight in total) takes about 30 minutes to complete including a reflective element. Students download certificates of completion for each of the modules and store these in their practice education passport. Web link: www.preceptor.ca/

6.11. Codes of Ethics and Standards of Practice
Prior to Practice Placement 1 each student is provided with printed copies of:
- College of Occupational Therapists Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct;

And links to electronic copies of:
- QMU Occupational Therapy Practice Education Handbook;
- Health Professions Council Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics;
- Health Professions Council Guidance for Students on Conduct and Ethics;
- Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency: Occupational Therapist;

6.12. Obtaining service users’ consent to occupational therapy
Gaining a service user’s consent to occupational therapy is a fundamental aspect of professional practice and as such students are advised to observe guidance contained in the HCPC Guidance for Students on Conduct and Ethics (HCPC 2016), and COT Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (COT 2015a)

Throughout practice placements students are advised to ensure that:-

- service users have been informed that they are a student;
- service users have given their permission for any assessments and interventions to be carried out by the student.
There will be situations where some service users cannot give consent, for example young children, or adults who lack capacity. In many of these cases, a responsible adult, usually a parent or guardian (or other person authorised to carry out this role) who is legally entitled to speak on their behalf will be asked to give their consent. This needs to be carefully and clearly recorded in the person’s care records.

6.13. Confidentiality issues during practice placements
Ensuring confidentiality is not just good practice; it is a right owed to all individuals and is central to the maintenance of trust between a health care professional and service users. They have the legitimate expectation that students will respect their privacy and act appropriately.

Students are expected to adhere to and comply with guidance provided by the regulatory body (HCPC 2016; HCPC 2012a) and the professional body (COT 2015 a) as well as referring to the NHS Scotland Code of Practice on Protecting Patient Confidentiality (NHS Scotland 2012). This can be found here: [https://www.beithhealthcentre.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Code_of_Confidentiality.pdf](https://www.beithhealthcentre.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Code_of_Confidentiality.pdf)

Service user case notes and records are the property of the placement provider they must be kept physically and electronically secure at all times. Paper based records should never be removed from the placement setting. Any written work completed by students during placement must also be stored as a confidential record.

Students are expected that to maintain the boundaries of confidentiality outside placement both in discussions, presentations and written course work for the University. At all times, the identity of service users, staff, and the organisation hosting the placement must be protected, and permission for the use of case material sought following the policies and guidelines of the placement provider.

People using occupational therapy services
In keeping with the above principles it is required that any written work or other such work submitted by students as part of theirs studies must preserve people’s identity. In order to ensure this any work must not refer to:-

- Person’s name, address, or date of birth;
- Any identifiable image of the service user;
- Community Health Index (CHI) number, or other identifiable code;
- Rare conditions where a small population may allow identification.

This can be achieved by anonymised, or pseudonymised information and clearly marking it as such.

Placement organisations
It is important that students do not specifically name staff, or work placement areas on any documents, or in assignments submitted to the University. Students are advised to describe placements in general terms for example, “community rehabilitation team”, “vocational rehabilitation service”, “intensive psychiatric care unit”. 

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Practice educators are an important part of the assessment process and should demonstrate good practice when assessing student’s written work prepared for placement. It is important to recognise that students are in a learning situation, formative feedback is an essential part of supporting students to comply with good practice. Practice educators will report actual, and possible student breaches of security or confidentiality to the University as a matter of priority.

7. Practice Educator Preparation

Queen Margaret University (QMU) works with other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Scotland to offer Practice Educator Training. QMU offers a range of opportunities to engage in education and training which range from single training days hosted both in QMU and at practice based learning sites around Scotland, to Masters level modules. These opportunities are described within the Facilitating Practice Based Learning Framework.

Single Training Days:
Single training days are held both in QMU and at practice based learning sites in Lothian, Fife, Forth Valley and the Borders. The content of these days is tailored to local needs and they are run in close collaboration with NHS Education Scotland Practice Education Leads (PELs).

Facilitating Practice-Based Learning Framework
The framework consists of four modules, presented at varying levels of academic depth and complexity. Each module builds upon the skills and knowledge presented in the previous module. Depending on the participant’s previous level of knowledge and experience, a range of entry and exit points is provided. Movement between modules is possible in order to be responsive to learners’ needs.

Modules are presented at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. One module at each level also provides accreditation as a practice educator with Royal College of Occupational Therapists or Society of Radiographers (as appropriate). Opportunities also exist for further postgraduate study on the MSc in Professional and Higher Education (also offered by QMU).

8. Contact mechanisms with and support for students during practice placements
The programmes team are committed to the learning experience of the student being one that facilitates an active, and interactive process that promotes intellectual autonomy. Peer-to-peer networks are used making learning more student-centred. Furthermore, the geographical dispersal of practice placements available to students requires exploitation of innovative and flexible support mechanisms that transcend time, and spaces/locations (Kukulska-Hulme 2010).

Support from the programme teams is provided in different ways throughout practice placements reflecting current demands for sustainable practices (COT 2013b; WFOT
Synchronous, and asynchronous mechanisms are currently deployed, including digital technologies. By making digital a complicit part of each practice-based learning experience, students are equipping themselves with skills they will need for using digital equipment and systems when they move into the world of work (Scottish Government 2011).

8.1. Practice education handbook
The practice education handbook, which is issued prior to Practice Placement 1 (PP1) covers a range of issues and topics relating to practice placements. It also contains the e-mail addresses and contact telephone numbers for the occupational therapy team, and other University staff involved in supporting practice placements.

8.2. Personal Academic Tutors
Personal Academic Tutors (PAT) act as the first point of contact for an identified group of students and practice educators throughout each practice placement. The PAT offers support throughout the placements, responding to initial requests for advice and support from practice educators and their students, normally within 24 hours (PAT's working days).

Support is offered face-face, via email, telephone, or Skype, or video conferencing. If a student’s performance is causing concern on any practice placement at the request of the practice educator and/or student, a visit can be arranged. A student may be visited on more than one occasion. The PAT records all communications, and follow–up actions agreed upon with practice educators and students. Copies of completed reports are retained in the student's file and the Professional Practice Tutor/ Programme Leader are kept informed of any issues.

8.3. Hub
The Hub Practice Education Area houses a bank of useful practice-based learning resources and materials for students. Resources include web links, sources of accommodation for placements, handbooks, assessment forms, templates for reflection and reading materials.

The Hub provides a forum for group support, and communication throughout each of the practice placements. Students participate in on-line discussions facilitated by their Personal Academic Tutors at designated points throughout each placement. Guidance on how to prepare for, and participate in these on-line discussions is given in preparatory sessions held at the University. Activities are designed to promote a community of learners and facilitate the development of students' self-assessment skills, fostering attitudes which value continuing professional development. Personal Academic Tutors encourage active knowledge sharing amongst the cohort through the use of peer-generated feedback.

8.4. Drop–in practice placement surgeries
Drop-in sessions organised by the Professional Practice Tutor (PPT) are held in the University at varying points throughout each practice placement. Students are encouraged to attend these sessions and share successes and issues they are experiencing on placement. The PPT acts as a facilitator and along with fellow students, listens and provides support/ advice to peers.
8.5. Complaints and problems on placement
If a student is experiencing difficulties on practice placement or needs to discuss any aspect of the placement with a member of academic staff they are advised to contact either their Personal Academic Tutor or the Professional Practice Tutor initially. Students may choose to discuss problems of a personal nature with their Practice Educator, or to contact their Personal Academic Tutor.

Where an incident occurs outside of normal working hours, where there is an urgent need to contact the University, please telephone: (0131)-474-0000. When prompted ask for reception.

8.6. Student counselling service
Students experiencing any personal difficulties while on placement are encouraged to use the University Student Counselling Service. This service is confidential and sessions can be arranged to suit the student’s timetable. All students are welcome to use the service, which can also provide information on other sources of help that may be more appropriate.

University Student Counselling Service

counselling@qmu.ac.uk

8.7. Practice placement debriefing workshops
Practice placement debriefing workshops, facilitated by the University Professional Practice Tutor are held at the concluding phase of each placement offering students a further opportunity to integrate the experience of practice placement context with the learning environment of the University. Students are encouraged to use the Placement Resume Form to review their personal and professional development with the Professional Practice Tutor, discuss relevant issues, and prepare for future practice placements.

Individual debriefing meetings are offered by the Professional Practice Tutor to students who have experienced challenges, ill health, or have failed a placement.

9. Contact mechanisms with and support for placement providers and practice educators
A variety of systems and mechanisms are currently in operation to ensure that support for placement providers and practice educators is monitored and continuously reviewed thereby contributing towards enhancement of the experience for all involved.

At a national level, the University has strong links at various levels with representatives of NHS Education for Scotland, and the work being implemented through NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Education Strategy for Allied Health Professions (AHP) 2015-2020. This brings opportunities for debating and exploring issues relating to practice placements for students from the allied health professions,
primarily in the NHS, but also in other organisations. For further information visit http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-professions.aspx

9.1. Developing new placement sites
Practical advice is available from the University to services considering the feasibility of offering practice placements to occupational therapy students from QMU. For further information, contact the Occupational Therapy Professional Practice Tutors at the University.

9.2. Practice-based learning support web site
A Practice-Based Learning Support website is available for organisations hosting practice placements and Practice Educators. The website has been designed to help make the role of placement educator easier by providing links to useful websites related to practice-based learning, along with electronic versions of all the handbooks and forms that Practice Educators need for practice placements. The Occupational Therapy Home Page can be found at: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/nursing-and-allied-health-programmes-pbl-information/

9.3. Regional occupational therapy practice educator forums
Links have been established with regional occupational therapy practice educators’ forums throughout Scotland. The Professional Practice Tutors are regularly invited to attend meetings, and actively contribute to events organised by these forums enabling opportunities for the exchanging of information between the University and practice educators including sharing of good practice.

9.4. Individual support
A student’s Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) is available to answer any queries during practice placements. Additional support and guidance is available to practice educators who are working with marginal students and very able students. Meetings (e.g. face-face, video conferencing, Skype) can be arranged at the request of the practice educator. The PAT acts as the first point of contact throughout a student’s practice placement responding to requests for information, or advice, normally within 24 hours (PAT’s working days)

Where an incident occurs outside of normal working hours, where there is an urgent need to contact the University, please telephone: (0131)-474-0000. When prompted ask for reception.

10. Learning outcomes for practice placements
Each practice placement module has a unique set of learning outcomes, devised by the University. These outcomes articulate with prior and future University studies and previous practice placement modules. Learning outcomes increase in complexity as the student progresses through the programme and each placement provides one of the building blocks for future ones.
10.1. Practice Placement 1 (PP1)

PP1 offers students the first opportunity of learning in a practice setting. They are acquiring knowledge and a repertoire of foundational skills for functioning in practice placements. Students observe, practice and reflect on their performance. Where appropriate they take an active role with clients, applying knowledge and developing professional reasoning skills. They are expected to prepare for and contribute towards the midway and final evaluations of their performance.

PP1 is of six weeks duration, full time and is located in Year 1, Semester 1 for the MSc programme. In the BSc (Hons) programme it is located in Year 1, Semester 2. By the end of PP1 students should have successfully completed 217 hours (30 days equivalent) of practice education.

During PP1, students are given half a day of study time per week (four hours). The study time forms part of the working week and is included in the overall hours for the placement. This half day may be used in a flexible way and is negotiated with the practice educator.

Students should receive daily supervision throughout the placement, including a minimum of one hour formal supervision with the practice educator each week.

**Learning outcomes for PP1**

On completion of this module the student will be able to:

1. With guidance, display professional behaviours congruent with the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, and the College of Occupational Therapists Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
2. Describe the contribution of occupational therapy within the context of the workplace, identifying the major factors that may influence service provision.
3. With guidance, work collaboratively with others and effectively utilise communication skills with service users and occupational therapy colleagues.
4. With guidance, carry out interviews with service users and accurately document/report information about their occupational needs.
5. With guidance, observe service users and identify key issues which may be influencing their health, occupational engagement and occupational performance.
6. With guidance, identify and implement personal and professional goals and targets.

**Practice Placement 1 recommended reading list**


10.2. Practice Placement 2 (PP2)
Practice Placement 2 encourages students to draw upon and integrate knowledge from their university based studies and previous learning from practice placement 1. During this placement they actively contribute to the practice setting. Emphasis is on practice and experience of the occupational therapy process, problem solving and communication. Students are expected to prepare for and actively contribute towards the midway and final evaluations of their performance.

PP2 is of six weeks duration, full time and is located in Year 1, at the end of Semester 2 for the MSc programme. In the BSc (Hons) programme it is located in Year 2, Semester 1. By the end of the PP2 module, students should have successfully completed 217 hours (30 days equivalent) of practice education.

During PP2, students are given half a day of study time per week (four hours). The study time forms part of the working week and is included in the overall hours for the placement. This half day may be used in a flexible way and is negotiated with the practice educator.

Students should receive daily supervision throughout the placement, including a minimum of one hour formal supervision with the practice educator each week.

Learning outcomes for PP2
On completion of this module the student will be able to:-

1. Practice within an ethical framework congruent with the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, and the College of Occupational Therapists Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
2. Recognise and discuss change, developments and policies that impact upon the practice setting.
3. Establish and maintain collaborative partnerships with team members including service users and carers in aspects of service provision.
4. With guidance, apply assessment tools and strategies effectively to analyse, prioritise and document service users’ occupational needs and goals.
5. With guidance, use activities and occupations with a range of service users, analysing the potential of these to facilitate change within a therapeutic process.
6. Evidence personal and professional reflection and goal setting.

Practice Placement 2 recommended reading list

10.3. Practice Placement 3 (PP3)
The third practice placement will enable students to broaden and consolidate their knowledge and skills. They gain a greater degree of autonomy, adopting a co-worker role with their practice educators and assume joint responsibility for all aspects of service provision. Students are actively involved in the supervisory process and engage in self-analysis and reflection accurately analysing and appropriately altering their own behaviour.

In the MSc programme, PP3 is of 14 weeks duration (three days per week) and is located Year 2, Semester 1. By the end of the PP3 module students should have successfully completed 305 hours (42 days equivalent) of practice education. Students receive ongoing supervision, this includes a minimum of one hour formal supervision with the practice educator on a fortnightly basis.

In the BSc (Hons) programme, PP3 is of eight weeks duration, full time and is located in Year 3, Semester 2. By the end of the PP3 module, students should have successfully completed 288 hours (40 days equivalent) of practice education. Students are given half a day of study time per week (four hours). The study time forms part of the working week and is included in the overall hours for the placement. This half day may be used in a flexible way and is negotiated with the practice educator. Students should receive daily supervision throughout the placement, including a minimum of one hour formal supervision with the practice educator each week.
Learning outcomes for PP3

On completion of this module students will be able to:

1. Practice within an ethical framework congruent with the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, and the College of Occupational Therapists Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
2. Appraise the impact of local and national initiatives on inter-agency working in practice contexts.
3. Display a person centred approach to practice to optimise the occupational therapy process to facilitate change with a range of individuals/groups/communities.
4. Justify the selection of standardised/non standardised assessment tools and document comprehensive assessments of individuals'/groups/communities occupational needs and goals.
5. Confidently articulate professional reasoning processes used to prioritise goals, manage, modify and evaluate appropriate interventions with a range of individuals/groups/communities.
6. Critique the evidence base for occupational therapy in an identified area of practice relevant to the placement setting.
7. Prepare, produce and maintain concise, accurate and logical records and reports.
8. Critically appraise personal learning and performance and plan for continuing professional development

Practice Placement 3 recommended reading list

10.4. Practice Placement 4

Practice placement 4 (PP4) is the final practice placement prior to graduation. At this level students will be expected to assume responsibility for a small caseload under minimal supervision.

PP4 is of eight weeks duration, full time and is located in Year 2, Semester 2 for the MSc programme. In the BSc (Hons) programme it is located in Year 4, Semester 1. By the end of the PP2 module, students should have successfully completed 288 hours (40 days equivalent) of practice education. During PP4, students are given
half a day of study time per week (four hours). The study time forms part of the working week and is included in the overall hours for the placement. This half day may be used in a flexible way and is negotiated with the practice educator.

Learning outcomes for PP4
On completion of this module students will be able to:

1. Practice within an ethical framework commensurate with the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, and College of Occupational Therapists Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
2. Integrate knowledge and skills to work effectively with individuals/groups/communities with multiple and/or complex needs.
3. Contribute effectively to professional/inter professional/inter-agency working;
4. In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, use appropriate strategies to identify issues and develop a proposed action plan.
5. Design appropriate programmes and implement these in collaboration with individuals/groups/communities.
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes reflecting on the outcome of the decisions made and take appropriate actions with a view to developing or improving practice.
7. Autonomously prepare and produce concise, logical and accurate records, reports and documents.
8. Critically reflect on personal learning and generate a personal development plan for addressing post registration development.

Practice Placement 4 recommended reading list
11. Guidance for students and practice educators: Fitness to practise

11.1. University Fitness to Practise Panel

The University has an obligation to ensure that students and graduates from its pre registration healthcare programmes are fit to practise. Fitness to practise has been interpreted to mean that a person has the skills, knowledge, character and health to undertake their professional role safely and effectively.

This means the University needs to consider whether students:

- have a declared long-term health condition or disability which could prevent them from practising safely without supervision;
- have any criminal convictions or cautions which could make them unsuitable for registration;
- have demonstrated that they can maintain the standards of conduct expected of a health and care professional.

Students studying to become a professional in a regulated profession have certain responsibilities and they are expected to meet high standards of conduct and ethics throughout their studies. Students studying on the occupational therapy pre-registration programmes at Queen Margaret University are informed that their conduct outside the practice environment, including their private lives, may have an impact on their fitness to practise. This is set out in the requirements of the regulatory body, the Health and Care Professions Council. Such requirements are designed to ensure that their behaviour justifies the trust that patients/service users and the public place in their profession.

If the University becomes aware of an issue regarding a student’s behaviour it may initiate Fitness to Practise (FtP) Panel proceedings. Where there are serious concerns a Fitness to Practise (FtP) Panel may be convened by the University. The Fitness to Practise (FtP) Panel has the delegated authority to impose a range of sanctions including requiring a student to suspend study, or withdraw from the programme (QMU, 2012b).

Fitness to practice policy: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/3973/fitness-to-practise-policy.pdf

11.2. Monitoring students’ fitness to practice on the pre-registration occupational therapy programmes

Fitness to practise is monitored through the following procedures:

**On application**

1. Applicants sign a health declaration
2. Each applicant must join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme

**During the programme**
1. Students are required to declare whether or not they have a conviction or caution as part of the annual matriculation process.

2. Students are required to work within the framework of the Health and Care Professions Councils Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students (HCPC 2016), and the COT Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (COT 2015a), and the University policies (QMU 2012a, QMU 2013a; QMU 2017).

3. Students are required to complete an annual Self-declaration of Fitness to Practise Form prior to each practice placement.

4. Records of absence will be kept for each student noting the duration and the reasons for absence. Students must inform both the practice educator, and University of any absences from placement. A supporting medical certificate must be obtained to cover absences of five working days or more from placement.

5. All students are expected to adopt a responsible attitude towards attendance at classes, and practice placements. Punctuality is essential.

12. Guidance for students and practice educators: How to work with a student who develops a health-related issue during practice placement

Occupational therapy students, have a responsibility under the HCPC Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students to limit, or stop practice if their performance is affected by their health (HCPC 2016). Self declaration is dependent upon honesty and insight and disclosure, whilst not a legal obligation, is certainly an ethical and moral obligation.

12.1. Student self declaration of health prior to practice placement

Prior to each practice placement commencing students complete a Self Declaration of Fitness to Practise Form confirming there has been no change to their physical or psychological health which could impact upon performance or safety of self or others.

Guiding principles

- Any student experiencing ill health and/or personal issues prior to a placement should make an appointment to meet with either the Personal Academic Tutor (PAT), and/or the Professional Practice Tutor (PPT).
- The student and PAT/PPT may collaborate to develop a course of action in order that appropriate measures and /or reasonable adjustments are in place for the duration of the placement. This may involve the Programme Leader, Disability Advisor, Student Counsellor and the practice placement site as required.
- Following a discussion with the student, the Programme Leader may recommend the student consults a medical practitioner in order to obtain a medical assessment on whether the student is able to commence the placement. A supporting medical certificate must be obtained by the student and forwarded to the Programme Leader.
If the student is unable to commence a placement, it will be deferred and the student will undertake another placement once she/he is in sound health subject to confirmation of fitness to practise by a medical practitioner.

12.2. What to do if a student develops a health issue during practice placement

Students developing a health issue during practice placement that significantly impacts on their performance, safety of self or others are advised to discuss their situation with the Practice Educator, and their PAT as soon as possible.

Guiding principles

- Following discussions with all relevant parties the student may be advised to consult a medical practitioner to obtain a supporting medical certificate providing confirmation of the student’s current health status and forward this to the University.
- This may result in the placement being terminated with the student commencing another placement when she/he is sound health subject to confirmation of fitness to practice by a medical practitioner.
- The PAT records that such a discussion has taken place and documents this on the Link Lecturer Report Form. A copy of the report will be held in the student’s file.

13. Guidelines for students and practice educators: How to work with a student displaying unprofessional behaviours during a practice placement

The nature of the work undertaken by students and the conditions to be met for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council require specific standards of conduct associated with professional status and practice. During practice education students remain accountable to the University for their professional conduct.

All students on practice placement are assessed on their professional conduct. The assessment of this is based on the Health and Care Professions Council Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students (HCPC 2016), and the College of Occupational Therapists Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (COT 2015a).

13.1. Expected professional behaviours during practice placements

Professionalism can be regarded as a meta skill, comprising situational awareness and contextual judgement (HCPC 2011). The true skill of professionalism may be not so much in knowing what to do, but when to do it. The role of the practice educator is to raise the student’s awareness of this.

Throughout practice placements it is expected that students, at all times will:-

- Respect everybody including people referred to occupational therapy, and their carers, peers, all staff, and other practice and university colleagues;
- Behave in a professional, and ethical manner;
- Act with integrity;
- Maintain proper and effective communications with every one;
• Respect service user confidentiality;
• Behave in an appropriate and non disruptive way;
• Disclose to the University any information which may affect their good character, health, and performance;
• Communicate effectively and take responsibility for any planned, or unplanned absence;
• Uphold the reputation of the profession, and the University.

13.2. Examples of unprofessional behaviours
Examples deemed to be evidence of unprofessional behaviours include but are not limited to:-
• Adverse reactions and/or inappropriate behaviours relating to individuals referred to occupational therapy, and/or specific client groups;
• Angry feedback to practice educator, arguing with practice educator about grade awarded for placement;
• Offensive, undermining, slanderous inappropriate communications about peers, service users, staff, and other colleagues, practice placement provider, and/or the University;
• Attitudes such as disloyalty, dishonesty, intolerance, irresponsibility, lack of commitment, lack of initiative, unreliability;
• Breach of confidentiality, misuse of confidential material relating to a service user;
• Boundary violations with service users, and/or colleagues;
• Deliberate misuse of equipment or materials, or monies of the placement site;
• Deliberate falsification of facts, as in lying or attempting to defame colleagues, or service users. For example, making false claims for placement expenses, lying about placement attendance, falsely claiming to have undertaken activities with a service;
• Failure to carry out agreed actions without explanation;
• Failure to recognise factors, and respond to issues affecting health and well being as a health care student, and to take appropriate steps to minimise harm to self and others;
• Unsatisfactory standards of record keeping;
• Inappropriate dress and appearance for practice placement;
• Incapacity for placement due to the influence of alcohol, or use or possession of illegal substances;
• Persistent absenteeism without good cause;
• Regular and/or repeated lack of focus of attention to learning on practice placement due to anything that has an effect on performance, for example undeclared ill health;
• Repeated failure to respond to feedback from appropriate others in relation to performance and behaviour.

13.3. Points of guidance for failure, and/or early termination of placement on ground of a student’s unprofessional behaviour.

Stage 1
The Practice Educator must:
• Discuss with the student the issues causing concern giving specific verbal feedback, and agree appropriate actions. Agree review date.
• Refer the student to the appropriate criteria on the assessment report form;
• Document that such a discussion has taken place in the student’s supervision record;
• No further action will taken unless the behaviour continues to be repeated.

Stage 2
If the above does not remove concerns about professional behaviour, it is essential that the Practice Educator involves the student’s Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) or the Professional Practice Tutor (PPT) in all discussions about the student’s behaviour.

The PAT or PPT will discuss with the practice educator the nature of the incident, and document the practice educator’s concerns on the Link Lecturer’s Report Form. Reference will be made to the appropriate assessment criteria and, where appropriate, the relevant sections of the HCPC Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students (HCPC 2016), and COT Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (COT 2015a). A copy of the Link Lecturer’s Report will be retained in the student’s file at the University.

All parties will consider the seriousness of the issue and determine whether or not further action needs to be taken. If the incident and/or behaviour is significant but not serious, specific objectives, and an action plan will be devised in consultation with the student and the practice educator. A review date will be set.

Any period defined for the purposes of improvement will operate on the basis that the improvement must be sustained thereafter. The ending of the improvement period will be noted, the student either being informed that the improvement is satisfactory, or that further action will be taken.

In order that students are given reasonable opportunity for improvement, the improvement period will be determined taking into account: -

- the time by which the student can reasonably effect an improvement;
- the Practice Educator’s need to make an robust assessment of the improvement;
- the likelihood of any re occurrence;
- any other factors relevant to the individual situation.

Throughout this process Practice Educators must refer to the relevant assessment criteria, and continue to document their observations of the student’s behaviour/performance. Similarly, any discussion with the student relating to his/her behaviour/performance whilst on placement is documented in the supervision record by the Practice Educator.

Stage 3
This stage is for those behaviours that either cannot be, or has not been resolved
through the processes previously outlined.

The issues that have arisen and consequent actions taken are referred to the Programme Leader, if this has not already occurred. The Programme Leader will discuss the situation, and review the documented evidence in collaboration with the Head of Division. At this point the University may take action in collaboration with the staff at the placement site to remove the student from practice placement.

The Practice Educator must complete the Practice Placement Assessment Form, documenting all issues arising during placement. We ask that the completed Assessment Form is returned to the University within 5 working days of the student’s removal from the placement setting.

If the allegation cannot be resolved locally, by the Programme Leader and Head of Division and there are concerns regarding professional suitability remaining, further action will be considered including reference to the Queen Margaret University Fitness to Practise Policy.

14. Guidance for students and practice educators: Delegation and health and safety in the workplace
Students are required to adhere at all times to health and safety policies that apply to the area in which they are working. If an incident occurs during practice placement, students must inform their Personal Academic Tutor at the University.

Students must observe and recognise the limits of their level of competence as they have a duty to be clear regarding competence if asked to do tasks beyond their current ability. The HCPC Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students (2016, p7) states “You must act within the limits of your knowledge and skills”.

During practice placement students must ensure that they:-

- Do not undertake work unsupervised with service users/others for which they do not feel competent;
- Take every reasonable care to ensure that they carry out work in a manner that is safe to all concerned;
- Ask for help when they need it.

Students are expected to familiarise themselves with departmental health and safety policies whilst on placement and recognise the importance of safe practice and risk assessment when undertaking their work related to placement. Practice educators must provide ensure that students receive an induction into relevant departmental policies and procedures at the setting of the placement.

The practice educator has a duty of care towards all of the service users on their caseload and a responsibility for case management. As such, students undertake aspects of the occupational therapy process under the direction of the practice educator (COT 2016; COT 2013b) It is inappropriate for students to take decisions regarding admission, discharge, or referral of clients to other agencies, other than in consultation with the practice educator.
14.1. Lone working in the community

Students may be required to carry out unaccompanied home or community visits during practice placements. Should this arise it is important that they work within the local/departamental policies, and comply with workplace safety procedures for lone working.

Guiding principles
- Practice educators must exercise their judgement in the selection of appropriate home, or community visits for the student to carry out alone. This includes taking into account the abilities, and experience of students, nature of the visit and level of responsibility required;
- Before making unaccompanied visits, students must be given the opportunity to experience community visits with the Practice Educator and/or other staff;
- Before the visit the practice educator should discuss and explore anticipated issues with the student so that the student is aware of the level of responsibility they are required to take;
- After the visit the practice educator and the student should discuss and reflect on the experience.

14.2. What to do if a student witnesses, or is involved in an incident affecting safety or well-being of service users or carers during practice placement

Guiding principles
- The Practice Educator and/or student follow local policy related to incident reporting and health and safety.
- The practice educator supports the student through this process as a learning opportunity. However if disciplinary procedures are required for students, the Queen University Fitness to Practise policy (QMU 2012b) would be considered.
- The Practice Educator and student inform the service manager of the placement site and complete relevant documentation.
- The Practice Educator/service manager, and the student should inform the student’s Personal Academic Tutor of the incident immediately by e-mail (HCPC 2016).
- The Personal Academic Tutor discusses any action required with the practice educator/service manager and informs the Professional Practice Tutor/Programme Leader.
- The Personal Academic Tutor documents that such a discussion has taken place using the Link Lecturer’s Report Form. A copy of this report will be retained in the student’s file at the University.
14.3. Raising and escalating concerns about safety or well-being of service users or carers during practice placements

Adapted from BSc Hons Nursing Guidance

I have concerns about the safety or wellbeing of people in my care or in the environment in which I work

If there is an immediate risk of harm, report your concerns without delay to the appropriate person or authority

Stage 1
Raise your concern:
1. Internally with your Practice Educator
2. With your QMU Professional Practice Tutor or Programme Leader

If unable to do this for any reason OR Concern not addressed adequately and/or immediate risk to others

Stage 2
Escalate your concern:
1. Internally to a higher level (Senior Practitioner)
2. Contact your QMU Professional Practice Tutor or Programme Leader

Seeking Advice
If you are unsure about whether, or how, to raise a concern at any stage, you should seek advice from your QMU Professional Practice Tutor or Programme Leader.

*Independent confidential advice is available from your professional body, trade union or PCaW. Student can also speak with their personal academic tutor.

Key Points
- Take immediate or prompt action
- Protect confidentiality
- Refer to whistleblowing policies
- Keep an accurate record of your concerns and actions taken

Public Concern at Work (www.pcaw.org.uk)
15. Guidance for students and practice educators: Acceptable use of social media, information communication technologies (ICT) and other mobile devices during practice placements

15.1. Using official ICT facilities, and mobile devices during practice placement

Organisations offering practice placements have policies regarding the use of mobile devices (e.g. smartphone, iPad, Android tablet, laptop computer, digital pen, memory stick) stating where and in what circumstances such devices are permitted or prohibited.

It is important therefore that when you go out on placement that you make it a priority to familiarise yourself with the local regulations. This will give you a better understanding of what is permitted and what is not.

Any ICT/official mobile devices offered to you during placements are provided for use in learning and/or pursuit of your studies. Keep user names and passwords secret at all times. You must not abuse ICT facilities for any other purpose, e.g. use of social networking sites or for recreational internet use. Be aware that organisations hosting placements may have auditing systems in place that can identify who is looking at what, and where, and when this activity took place.

Service user confidentiality, privacy, and dignity must be maintained at all times. You should never use your own mobile devices or Queen Margaret University ICT to create or send official care records (including photographs, videos, audio recording).

Keep safe

As a Health Sciences student your studies may involve internet searches drawing upon on anatomical terms and phrases. This may generate unwanted links to objectionable websites. You are advised to use wherever possible, specific health science related search engines.

Even if you are careful you may accidentally access internet sites you did not mean to. This might happen because you clicked on a misleading link, you clicked on a link by accident, or because a site has been ‘hijacked’. You may also find that you get bombarded by unsolicited and explicit ‘pop-up’ advertising. If any of these things happen whilst students on placement, you should:

- Take a note of the URL (web address) of the site and the time it was accessed;
- Tell someone immediately. If possible, show them what happened;
- Record the details of the site accessed, before logging off the computer);
- Tell your practice educator as soon as possible;
- Tell local ICT staff (any alerts regarding inappropriate internet use will go to them first);
- Contact your personal academic tutor at the University to advise them of what has happened.

There may be an investigation into your on-line activities, but if the accident was legitimate and these steps are followed, it will be resolved quickly.
15.2. Using social media
The University acknowledges that social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Linked-in, Blogging, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram) is a significant part of peoples' lives and is a positive way to keep in touch and share information (Crowe & Mclean 2013). However, there have been occurrences where social media has been used for less positive reasons, or for a substantial length of time during practice placement, hence the need for this guidance to support responsible usage.

Health and social care professionals could be putting their registration at risk if posting inappropriate comments about service users and colleagues or posting any material that could be considered explicit. The Health and Care Professions Council (no date), and the College of Occupational Therapists (COT 2015d) have both produced statements/briefings on the use of social media. These can be found at:

- [https://www.rcot.co.uk/promoting-occupational-therapy/using-social-media](https://www.rcot.co.uk/promoting-occupational-therapy/using-social-media)

The HCPC notes in its Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students, “You must make sure that your behaviour does not public confidence in your profession” (HCPC 2016, p10). This means that conduct on-line, and conduct in the real world should be judged in the same way and should be at a similar high standard.

You should be very careful about the information you post on-line. You should remember that:-

- The law around defamation and harassment, and confidentiality applies wherever you may be;
- Anything posted on-line to a social networking site is in the public domain, even with the strictest privacy settings;
- The more your personal life is exposed through social networking sites, the more likely it is this could have a negative impact;
- What may be considered as “letting off steam” about a situation at placement could potentially be seen by another person as unprofessional behaviour.

The following points are offered as guidance:-

- Make use of appropriate etiquette when posting materials to social networking sites. Act responsibly at all times upholding the reputation of the profession, and Queen Margaret University;
- Protect your own privacy. Think through the kinds of information you want to share and with whom, and adjust your privacy settings;
- Observe placement providers’ bullying, harassment and dignity polices when posting on-line (including e-mail, and text messaging) with colleagues, and peers;
- Do not post information to social networking sites that may lead to the identification of service users;
• Do not make disparaging remarks about the placement, service users, or employees on a social networking site. Even when anonymised these are likely to be inappropriate.

The University does not discourage students from using such services. However you should be aware the University will take seriously any occasions where these services are used inappropriately. If occasions arise of what might be read to be online harassment, or materials deemed to contravene professional conduct these will be dealt with in the same way as other such instances.

16. Guidance for students and practice educators: Supervision during collaborative or project-focussed practice placements

A ‘long-arm’ model of professional supervision may be required if there is no on-site occupational therapist (OT). This is provided by an OT who acts as the Practice Educator but is located at a different site, or different organisation to that where the placement is based. This supervision may be on a face-face basis, by long distance via telephone and/or information technologies. Throughout the placement, an on-site mentor at the host site co-ordinates the learning outcomes. The on-site mentor is a person in the organisation where the placement is held who gives day to day management/guidance where there is no on-site occupational therapy practice educator (OT PE). Students may work in pairs or groups during these placements affording opportunities to realise the benefits of peer assisted learning.

In addition to section 3 of this document, there are additional responsibilities for this type of placement as outlined below.

16.1. “Long-arm” OT Practice Educator responsibilities
• Review University placement documentation, and placement provider information prior to the placement commencing.
• Receive pre-placement information from student and respond accordingly.
• Undertake a pre-placement visit to the host organisation with student where possible/ required.
• Meet with the student if a joint pre-placement visit to the host organisation is not possible.
• To support the student(s) to maintain an occupational perspective in the setting.
• To provide guidance with linking knowledge into practice, signpost student to resources, and facilitate student reflection.
• Assess the student in relation to the University learning outcomes for the placement, and the student’s Learning Agreement.
• Undertake mid way, and final evaluations of the student’s performance, in conjunction with the on-site mentor, and student
• To be available for student e-mail / phone contacts/ Skype calls.
• Evaluate the placement using the mechanisms for placement monitoring.
16.2. On-site mentor responsibilities

- Review University placement documentation and placement provider information prior to the placement commencing
- Prepare the team and others for the student’s arrival
- Receive pre placement information from student and respond accordingly
- To provide/oversee induction processes including relevant policies, and procedures as stated in the Practice Placement Agreement between the placement provider and Queen Margaret University
- Provide onsite supervision for the student
- Ensure there is a named person whom the student can refer to in the absence of the on-site mentor
- Oversee the student’s programme informed by the student’s Learning Agreement and the University learning outcomes for the practice placement
- Communicate with the OT practice educator on a regular basis (at least once a week)
- To provide regular informal supervision and support to the student either individually, or with the fellow student if in pairs
- Contribute to the mid-way, and final assessments of the student’s performance
- Complete paperwork and evaluate the experience as required
- Maintain communication with University Professional Practice Tutor throughout the practice placement

16.3. Student responsibilities

- To be self directed in identifying their own leaning needs using the Learning Agreement, whilst collaborating with the OT PE and on-site mentor on its development
- To record reflections and share these with OT PE and on-site mentor as appropriate
- To discuss the delegation of tasks with an appropriate member of staff on placement prior to taking any action, ensuring the person to whom the task has been delegated to has the appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and information to carry out the tasks safely and effectively.
- To ensure that any project or individual pieces of work are concluded within the timeframe of the placement, or are sustainable
- To seek out support and guidance related to any aspect of placement if there are any uncertainties or risk related to service users, staff or themselves
- Undertake all agreed contacts and communication relating to supervision
- Complete paperwork and evaluate the experience as required

Practice Placement Agreements are negotiated by the University and the placement provider and are a statement of the principles which will apply to the provision of practice placements. ‘Long-arm’ OT practice educators and on-site mentors are encouraged to attend practice educator training events hosted by the University.
17. Guidance for students and practice educators: Practice placement assessment process

Practice educators and students have access to paper-based, and electronic copies of the practice placement assessment forms. These can be used throughout the placement as a basis for discussion between to help students with self-reflection on their own performance.

The purpose of the assessment process is to:-

- To generate feedback for students about their performance;
- To identify strengths and weaknesses in the student’s professional practice and modify learning accordingly;
- To provide a basis for discussion in relation to the student’s performance;
- To provide a documented record of students’ level of competence in relation to their stage of education.

Assessment of learning on practice placements may be by direct observation, discussion, written evidence, feedback from colleagues, service users, carers, and the student’s own self-evaluation.

17.1. Midway review (formative assessment)

The midway review takes the form of a discussion between the practice educator, and the student highlighting areas of progress across the specific University learning outcomes for each placement. It guides the actions to be taken by the practice educator, and student during the remainder of the placement. Areas requiring further development and priorities to be addressed in the second half of the placement should be highlighted, agreed and documented in the "development plan" section of the Assessment Form.

Normally, grades for specific criteria are not given at the mid-way review. Written feedback only should be documented on the Assessment Form. The purpose of these comments is to provide feedback to students so that they can gain an appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses, giving them the opportunity to modify and/or further develop specific aspects of their performance before completing the placement.

It is expected that students will prepare for the midway review by completing the “student’s comments” section. This self-assessment process contributes towards the development of students’ professional judgement by encouraging them to reflect on their practice, and identify evidence of meeting goals identified in their Learning Agreement.

Midway review comments must be signed, and dated by both practice educator and student.

17.2. Final evaluation (summative assessment)

The final evaluation should be completed at least one day before the end of the practice placement and discussed with the student. This provides the student with
the opportunity to review the report before signing it and returning it to the practice educator.

Practice educators must refer to the University Grade Descriptors when completing the final evaluation. Detailed grade descriptors, A*-G are available in each of the practice placement assessment forms. In making a judgement, it is important to bear in mind the extent to which the placement has given the opportunity to demonstrate the criterion being considered, and what can be realistically expected from students in relation to their stage of the programme.

Mark a cross on each horizontal line to indicate the student’s level of performance for each of the criteria.

Where a particular criterion is not applicable to the practice setting, or where the student has not been assessed on a particular criterion, then N/A should be inserted in the grid. We ask that practice educators document the reason(s) for lack of opportunity in the “practice educator’s comments” section.

Students must pass all University learning outcomes for each practice placement. All of the criteria for each learning outcome must be passed to achieve an overall pass grade for practice placement.

Practice educators must provide written comments in the “final evaluation” section along with a suggested development plan for future practice. This must be signed and dated by the practice educator.

Students must prepare for the final evaluation, by completing the “student’s comments”. Comments must be signed and dated by the student.

17.3. Final evaluation: service user feedback
Service user comments (if available) should be recorded in the “service user comments” section. Students are encouraged to consider service users’ perspective on their performance as this is good professional practice. This will always be a voluntary process for the service user. Students should always discuss with their practice educator before approaching a service user for feedback.

17.4. Compiling the assessment form
The following list of points is intended to assist practice educators in the compilation of the assessment forms.

Feedback should be:

1. **Individualised and relevant**, demonstrating attention to the particular development needs of the student, rather than comparing with or generalising to other students.

2. **Goal-directed**, providing assistance and increased understanding of what is expected or required, with a focus on the needs of the clients and relationship to the learning goals of the student. At the mid-way appraisal learning objectives may need modification or new ones developed. It is helpful to
summarise the key points in the practice educators’ comments section in the form of a development/action plan.

3. **Behaviour-focused**, rather than personality focused. Feedback that refers to what the student does, allows scope for change.

4. **Respectful**, demonstrating mindfulness of acceptable boundaries, respecting confidentiality and using language that is non-judgemental.

5. **Balanced**, comment on strengths and what the student did well with areas of weakness or that require further growth. Written feedback should be constructive and structured so that students are clear about specific aspects of their performance requiring further development and/or improvement.

6. **Collaborative**, inviting student involvement and agreement in identifying strengths and weaknesses, in seeking solutions, reaching conclusions and formulating plans for future action, facilitating self-evaluation.

7. **Change focused (non-evaluative)**, exploring specific strategies to maintain strengths and improve weaknesses and facilitating a problem-solving approach that highlights the consequences both positive and negative of particular behaviours or actions. Encourage improvement with practical and specific suggestions and evidence required from the student to demonstrate further achievement.

8. **Factual (not generalised)**, providing evidence-based examples based on observed performance that highlight actual strengths and weaknesses of modifiable behaviours that have been observed. Provide specific suggestions for improvements to what students are doing, or occasions where positive behaviour was demonstrated, and discussing outcomes of each behaviour.

9. **Aligned** to the university grade descriptors. Check for congruence between written comments and the actual grade(s) awarded

17.5. **Awarding an overall grade for students’ performance during practice placement**

Assessment forms are graded in the range A*-G according to the Queen Margaret University criteria for undergraduate modules (QMU, 2017). In assigning an overall grade, practice educators are expected to refer to the University Grade Descriptors provided in the assessment forms and identify the final grade awarded by circling one of the grades on the front page of the assessment form.

A student awarded a grade D or above by the practice educator, is considered to be safe in practice and will pass the placement. The final grade is subsequently converted into a percentage by the Professional Practice Tutor in line with University grade to mark conversion rules. (QMU, 2017).
Practice educators should always bear in mind that they are making a judgement about the students' performance in relation to what is reasonably expected of a student at that level of the programme and not in comparison with a qualified occupational therapist.

**Grade A*: Pass - Outstanding Performance**
In allocating this grade the practice educator is recognising an outstanding performance. For the level of the programme an outstanding, exceptionally able, safe performance consistently demonstrated throughout the whole of the practice placement.

**Grade A: Pass - Excellent Performance**
In allocating this grade the practice educator is recognising an excellent performance. For the level of the programme, an excellent, safe performance, consistently demonstrated throughout the whole of the practice placement.

**Grade B: Pass - Very good performance**
In allocating this grade the practice educator is recognising a very good performance. For the level of the programme, a very good, safe performance, consistently demonstrated throughout the majority of the placement.

**Grade C: Pass - Good performance**
In allocating this grade the practice educator is recognising a good performance. For the level of the programme, a good, safe performance consistently demonstrated for the majority of the placement.

**Grade D: Pass - Satisfactory performance**
In allocating this grade the practice educator is recognising a satisfactory performance. For the level of the programme a satisfactory, safe, performance consistently demonstrated for the second half of the placement. Additional engagement may be required to sustain and enhance performance in subsequent practice placements.

A student who is awarded an overall grade D or above, is considered to be safe in practice and will pass the placement.

**Grade E: Fail - Unsatisfactory performance**
In allocating this grade the practice educator is recognising an unsatisfactory performance. For the level of the programme an unsatisfactory performance. Some attempt to address issues in the practice setting, but does not meet the criteria outlined for an acceptable performance in several areas of practice. Shows very limited ability to learn from previous experience.

**Grade F: Fail – Unsatisfactory performance**
In allocating this grade the practice educator is recognising an unsatisfactory performance. Unsatisfactory attempt to address issues in the practice setting and does not meet the criteria outlined for an acceptable performance in a significant
number of areas of practice. Shows little or no ability to learn from previous experience

**Grade G: Fail – Unsatisfactory performance or non-attendance**
In allocating this grade the practice educator is recognising an unsatisfactory performance. Shows no ability to learn from previous experience and/or lacks willingness to engage with the practice placement.

**17.6. Guidance for awarding an A*, or A grade**
A student may achieve higher grades in the practice placement modules than in the university-based modules. Occasionally this may be an inaccurate representation due to:-

- Pressure from the student to increase the grades;
- Wishing to reward the student for fitting in to the placement area particularly well;
- Misinterpretation of the University Grade Descriptors.

The following is a list of points to assist in the evaluation process:-

- Keep written records of A* and A standard performance in the core areas. These might have been observed by the practice educator or reported by other members of staff;
- Ask the student to provide his/her own examples of A* and A standard performance;
- If the student is achieving the equivalent of an A* or A standard performance at the midway review stage, or final evaluation, contact the University and ask to speak with the Professional Practice Tutor;
- Keep students informed of this process so that they are aware they need to consistently demonstrate evidence of an A* or A standard performance.

It is hoped that these guidelines will ensure greater rigour in the allocation of an A* or A grade, contributing towards the assessment process by providing a second objective viewpoint. Ultimately it is the practice educator’s responsibility to evaluate the student’s performance, and allocate a grade that represents the abilities and aptitudes of the student in relation to the University marking criteria.

**Practice educators experiencing difficulties reaching a final decision are actively encouraged to contact the Professional Practice Tutors at Queen Margaret University.**

**17.7. Practice placement time cards**
Attendance is monitored by the student’s Practice Educator throughout the placement, and all absences from placement must be recorded on the student’s Time Cards, and the relevant section of the Assessment Form. These records are taken into account when testimonies, or references are provided for students.
Student recorded time is from that start of the shift until the end of the shift (as approved by the practice educator). Lunch breaks are excluded. Minutes should be rounded up/down to nearest 30 minutes.

**Important!**

Hours accrued in failed practice placements, cannot compensate for time lost in subsequent placements (COT, 2014a).

Absence of a written record of the appropriate number of practice placement hours may result in students having to complete extra placement hours prior to graduation.

17.8. How to support a student at risk of failing a practice placement

Whilst being relatively rare, students failing practice placements does happen and can be a very stressful situation for all concerned. These guidelines are aimed at reducing some of the stresses and ensuring that a fair process is in place to help support the student, and practice educator concerned.

In failing a practice placement, a student is being made aware that for whatever reason s/he has failed to reach a satisfactory standard in the required learning outcomes for the practice placement.

One of the key aspects in managing this is early detection – the sooner a student’s performance can be identified as not satisfactory then the more opportunity available to the student to attempt redeem the situation.

Normally, by the midway review, the student needs to be informed that he/she is failing the placement.

- The word “fail” must be clearly used in this discussion
- All attributes/knowledge gaps where the student is not passing must be clearly indicated to the student and examples must be given by the practice educator
- Practice educator must write in the midway comments sections on the assessment form that the midway review has indicated that the student is failing the placement and list the areas causing concern.

The Practice Educator must contact the student’s Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) at Queen Margaret University. A discussion will then ensue to decide the most appropriate form of action to ensure support for both student, and practice educator. Whilst each situation will vary and requires to be handled appropriately, there are key aspects as how to best work forward. Honesty is paramount and requires both Practice Educator and student to be open within the learning relationship. Clarity is important, make sure the student is very clear as to where their weaknesses lies and they might best address these. This will involve the setting of weekly goals/objectives for the rest of the placement so that the student has an agreed plan to move things forward. The student’s PAT can help in any of this process. The PAT will document
agreed actions taken on the Link Lecturer’s Report Form. A copy of this report will be held in the student’s practice placement file at the University.

**Guiding principles**

- Inform the student as soon as possible if their performance is causing concern.
- Inform QMU as soon as possible if the student’s performance is causing concern – preferably no later than the midway review.
- Encourage the student to talk with their PAT at the University at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that the student receives honest, non-judgemental feedback which focuses on the key areas causing concern.
- Document these discussions have taken place on the weekly supervision record. Both practice educator and student should sign this.
- Set weekly goals/objectives with the student for the remainder of the placement – making these realistic and achievable. Write these down on the Learning Agreement and again both Practice Educator and student should sign this.
- Schedule weekly feedback sessions indicating progress on the set goals/objectives and document discussions on the weekly supervision record.
- Encourage the student to use reflection as much as possible to allow them to assess their own performance – giving some focus to where things go well as well as those where performance has not been so good.
- Keep in touch with the student’s PAT at University to feedback on progress.
- If the student has not been able to retrieve their performance by the final evaluation then ensure that all verbal, and written comments are in line with the University grade descriptors so that the student is left with a clear picture of where their performance did not meet expected levels. If deemed appropriate, a member of the University programme team can also be present at this discussion.

### 17.9. Receiving a fail grade on practice placement

A student who fails a placement is permitted one attempt only to retrieve a failed practice placement module. Hours accrued during a failed practice placement do not count towards the minimum requirement of 1000 hours (COT 2014a). If the module is ultimately failed, and retrieval processes for the module have been exhausted then the student will be asked to withdraw from the named award. A student may also be denied the opportunity to retrieve the module if the failure originally occurred on grounds of professional unsuitability (COT, 2014a).

The Professional Practice Tutor offers an individual appointment to every student who has failed a placement, to discuss and prepare for the retrieval of a failed placement.

### 17.10. Discontinuation of a practice placement

Discontinuation of a placement is a rare event, however it can occur and each situation is unique. It is important that all involved in this decision be as objective as possible, are clear about the relevant evidence that they have, follow the relevant procedures, seek advice and record decisions and outcomes.
A placement may be terminated for reasons related to the student, reasons related to the practice educator, reasons related to the placement site, or a combination of all of these.

**Reasons related to the student**
- Professional conduct
- Issues related to competency and/or fitness to practise
- Risk assessment has identified serious and likely risk of the student causing harm to themselves, and/or service users/carers
- Health and safety issues and mandatory programme requirements
- Personal issues
- Service-user or carer related

**Reasons related to the practice educator**
- Practice educator competency, and/or conduct issues
- Personal issues

**Reason related to the placement site**
- Staffing shortages
- Service user related issues
- Outbreak of infectious disease

Where this is the case the University should be notified at the earliest opportunity so that an appropriate action plan can be developed.

**Possible actions might be:**
- Placement continues with extra support from the placement provider, and the University;
- Another Practice Educator is able to facilitate the placement for the student in the same area;
- Another Practice Educator is able to facilitate the placement for the student in a different area;
- The placement terminated is taken at another time dependant upon made by the Board of Examiner;
- In the instance of a pass standard being unachievable, resulting in a failed practice placement, consultation between the student, Professional Practice Tutor, and Programme Leader will take place to determine the most appropriate way forward.

17. 11. **Deferring a practice placement**
Students who are unable for legitimate reasons to undertake the placement at the allotted time will have a placement arranged at a deferred time. This will count as a first attempt.

17.12. **Scheduling of a deferred or retrieval practice placement**
Normally, a retrieval, or deferred practice placement takes place over the summer before the student progresses to the next level of the programme. Ultimately, this is
dependent upon decisions taken by the Board of Examiners, and the availability of an appropriate practice placement.

17.13. **Student evaluation of practice placements**
At the conclusion of each placement students complete an Evaluation of Placement Form offering constructive feedback to the practice educator, the placement provider, and the University to enable ongoing enhancement of the learning environment. A copy of this form is retained by the placement provider. The signed original copy must be returned the University by the student.

17.14. **Assessment paper work submission**
Students are responsible for ensuring the return of completed assessment paper work to the University. The Assessment Form, and Student Evaluation of Placement Form must be submitted by the student to the assessment box in the University School Office Reception within five working days of completion of placement.

**Important!**

Practice educators are asked to ensure that students are given a signed master copy of the completed Assessment Form and Student Evaluation of Placement Form before leaving the placement site.

In exceptional circumstances students may submit the completed paperwork to the University by post however, they must ensure that they obtain certification of proof of postage that the package was forwarded to the University within five working days of completion of placement.

**Forms are posted to:**
Pamela Knox,
Placement Administrator,
School Office,
Queen Margaret University,
Queen Margaret University Drive,
Edinburgh,
EH21 6UU.

Students must make copies of completed paperwork for their own records before submission to the School Office. The practice-based learning team cannot respond to requests from students for copies of completed paperwork at a later date.

At the conclusion of each placement, students retain their Learning Agreement in their Portfolio. They must also securely store their practice placement time cards as these may be required to validate placement hours at any time during the programme.

17.15. **Appeals procedure**
A student wishing to appeal against a decision about a grade received for practice placement may do so by following the procedures, and practices set out in the
18. References, and Bibliography List


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