



Multi-Professional Mentorship and Assessment in the Learning Environment

This policy identifies standards for mentoring and assessing learners at all levels in practice placements. It ensures all students and learners are assessed and mentored by appropriately qualified and occupational competent staff in a professional manner. It is designed to meet national and local quality assurance guidance and standards.

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POLICY AUTHOR	Practice Education Facilitator

Important Note:

The Intranet version of this document is the only version that is maintained.

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SCOPE

This policy applies to all registered professionals who work within Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and who are involved in the mentorship and assessment of pre-registration students and Trainee Assistant Practitioners (TAPs). It also applies to anyone mentoring, teaching or assessing CPFT staff undertaking Foundation Degrees or Vocational Awards.

NMC Registrants

All registered nurses have a professional obligation to *'support students' and colleagues' learning to help them develop their professional competence and confidence'* (Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) 2015). The NMC Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice (NMC 2008,) expects that the majority of registrants will meet the mentor competencies to meet this requirement (Stage 2 of the Developmental Framework). Accredited mentor courses are available through the local Higher Education Institutions (HEI) at academic Levels 5, 6 and 7.

The Trust has a responsibility for maintaining a local register of current mentors and sign off mentors which will be available for NMC inspection on request. All NMC mentors and sign off mentors must attend an annual mentor update and undergo a Triennial Review of their mentor competence which is monitored and recorded on the data base. It will be the responsibility of managers to monitor mentor competency and progression towards Triennial Review as part of the annual appraisal process.

HCPC Registrants

All HCPC registrants have a responsibility to support students on practice placement. There is an expectation that registrants will meet the requirements of a clinical educator and gain the relevant qualifications and experience to achieve this. Multi professional educator updates are available locally and are facilitated by Practice Education Facilitators (PEFs). All clinical educators have access through CPD to the HEI accredited mentor courses. HCPC professional standards state that all professionals registered with HCPC 'must understand the importance of participation in training, supervision and mentoring'. It is therefore expected that all experienced HCPC registrants will participate in mentoring learners except where there are extenuating circumstances.

Assistant Practitioners

Trainee Assistant Practitioners are mentored and signed off as competent by a registered professional. The Assistant Practitioner role works across professional boundaries and therefore the trainee may be assessed by several registered professionals or others competent to do so, with the named mentor having responsibility for ensuring quality of skills assessment. Assistant Practitioners who have undertaken the accredited HEI mentorship course can mentor formative placement first year students.

Vocational Award Candidates

All staff undertaking vocational awards and apprenticeships are assessed by a qualified vocational assessor who meets the awarding body requirements.



Cadets

Cadets on placement from the college will be allocated to a 'buddy' in the workplace who is occupationally competent and who will provide feedback to the Further Education Institute at which the cadet is studying on the cadet's performance in the workplace.

The Care Certificate

All staff undertaking the Care Certificate will be assessed by a vocationally competent person who has achieved the Care Certificate Assessor Standards.

Leadership Programmes

Staff undertaking Leadership Programmes will have access to external coaching and mentoring from the North West Leadership Academy and peer support from Communities of Practice within Cumbria Partnership





Introduction

The importance of the role of the mentor and the quality of the mentorship offered in practice cannot be over-emphasised; learning experienced in the clinical setting ensures health care professionals and the non-registered health care workers of the future are fit for practice and purpose. The mentor/educator/supervisor is a key support to students and learners in practice; this is where students and learners apply their knowledge, learn key skills and achieve the required standard of competence for registration and/or qualification. In addition, the registered professionals/assessors responsible for mentorship and assessment must demonstrate professional values and behaviours and ensure all pre-registration students are aware of the need to work in a respectful and compassionate manner.

Statement of Intent

The intention of this policy is to give clear guidance to all registered professionals and others involved in assessing and confirming competency of Pre-registration Students, TAPs, Cadets and Vocational Learners to ensure a high standard of mentoring, education and learning, and assessment in all clinical areas.

Definitions

Mentor- is a nurse or midwife who facilitates learning, supervises and assesses students in the practice setting.

Sign Off Mentor- is a nurse or midwife who, in addition to acting as a mentor as described above, makes judgements about whether a student has achieved the required standards of proficiency for safe and effective practice. A sign off mentor must be on the same part or sub-part of the register as that which the student is intending to enter.

Educator – is a registered professional who mentors and assesses pre-registration students from various health care professions.

Supervisor – is a registered professional who supervises and assesses pre- registration students in Social Work.

A Vocational Assessor – is an occupationally competent and qualified assessor who is approved by awarding bodies to assess vocational learners.

Cadets are assessed by the Further Education Institute with whom they are undertaking their course but will be **'buddied'** in the workplace by a nominated person.





Duties

Mentor/Educator/Supervisor

- Provide students with an environment conducive to learning.
- Ensure that practice is evidence based and that students are encouraged to use the organisation's electronic systems.
- Ensure that the student is aware of who their mentor/assessor is before commencement of placement learning.
- Recognise student's supernumerary status to ensure that they are afforded the opportunity for learning.
- Ensure, where possible, that duty rota is completed to accommodate pre-registration students working with mentor at least 50% of the time. This can include all shifts/hours worked as a normal part of service provision e.g. late shifts, night shifts and weekends.
- The role of mentor / educator / supervisor can be delegated to another appropriately trained person in the absence of the allocated individual.
- For students on formative placements, any registered professional or suitably qualified health care professional can act as mentor.
- Vocational assessors should have protected time as agreed with managers to assess and record learner's competence and knowledge


Sign off Mentor (Nursing only)

- To fulfil the duties of a mentor or work with the allocated mentor to confirm that a student nurse is competent and has reached a level of proficiency to be admitted to the NMC register. All mentors assessing pre-registration midwifery students must have sign off mentor status.

The roles and responsibilities of a mentor/educator

- Possess current registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) or Health and Care Professional's Council (HCPC).
- Have undertaken a mentoring, teaching or assessment qualification recognised by the NMC or HCPC.
- Ensure that competency achieved within their mentoring qualification is maintained and recorded within professional body guidelines.
- Attend mentor update annually (mandatory for nurse mentors, sign off mentors and practice teachers).
- Maintain a mentor evidence record as evidence of reflective practice.
- Develop and maintain clinical skills relevant to their area of practice.
- Have up to date knowledge of the pre-registration curriculum.
- Act as a role model to students.
- Be aware of support mechanisms if there are issues that need to be addressed that may impact on the learning and assessment of the student i.e difficulty in achieving competencies.



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- Maintain competence in the key areas of mentoring and assessment relevant to their registration and professional body standards.

The roles and responsibilities of the Practice Teacher

- Provide support and guidance to the student when learning new skills, applying new knowledge and transferring existing knowledge and competence to a new context of practice
- Act as a resource to the student to facilitate learning and professional growth
- Manage the student's learning in practice in order to ensure public protection
- Directly observe the student's practice, or use indirect observation when appropriate, to ensure that NMC defined outcomes and competencies are met.

The roles and responsibilities of the Practice Education Facilitator

- Maintain close links with the universities.
- Work with placements to ensure they meet the requirements set by the NMC and HCPC in relation to learning and assessment of pre-registration students.
- Work closely with the university in relation to quality of student placements, responding to audit findings and feedback.
- Maintain the mentor register and monitor the availability of sufficient numbers of suitable mentors.
- Monitor placements to ensure they are in a position to mentor students at all stages of training.
- Offer assistance to mentors across the organisation with any issues mentors may feel they need to discuss.
- Develop, implement and monitor action plans in response to negative feedback from students with placement areas concerned.
- All mentoring activity will be evaluated via the mentor evidence record. This is directly managed by line managers within the annual appraisal process. The Practice Education Facilitator will give help and advice when necessary.

The Role of an Assessor

- To support learner/s with relevant Vocational Qualification
- Assessor must have workplace occupational competence
- Maintain and update own CPD
- Attend a minimum of two standardisation meetings per year
- Report progress or any problems to Internal Verifier/Vocational Co-ordinator
- Plan assessment with the learner and guide them to gather evidence
- Use a range of different assessment methods to support learner needs and the unit quality assurance requirements
- Judge evidence from the learner to relevant standards
- Give feedback to learner for their evidence to support development
- Involvement in external audit as requested by vocational department



Details of the Policy

This policy describes the framework for the successful mentoring of pre-registration student nurses and AHPs, for mentoring and assessing TAPs and assessing vocational learners.

Training

Education and training for the roles of nursing mentor and sign-off mentor is carried out within Higher Education Institutions. Other professions can also access the Multi-professional Support of Learning and Assessment in Practice as CPD at Higher Education Levels 5,6 and 7 through CPD apply <https://wsecure.wirral.nhs.uk/PQCPD/>

Vocational assessors must complete a relevant vocational assessor's award

Cadet 'Buddies' and Care Certificate Assessors must achieve Care Certificate Assessor Standards





Monitoring compliance with this Document

The table below outlines the Trusts' monitoring arrangements for this policy/document. The Trust reserves the right to commission additional work or change the monitoring arrangements to meet organisational needs.

Aspect of compliance or effectiveness being monitored	Monitoring method	Individual responsible for the monitoring	Frequency of the monitoring activity	Group / committee which will receive the findings / monitoring report	Group / committee / individual responsible for ensuring that the actions are completed
All mentors conducting summative assessments are appropriately qualified and all sign off mentors had mapped their previous experience or if obtaining a mentor qualification post- September 2007 they have worked with a sign off mentor on three sign off assessments	Audit	Practice Education Facilitator	Biannually	Appropriate University Standards Group and Trust Governance Group	Education and Learning Manager
All mentors complied with the requirements of Triennial Review.	Audit	Practice Education Facilitator	Annually	Appropriate University Standards Group and Trust Governance Group	Education and Learning Manager
All Educators are appropriately qualified and updated with knowledge of current curriculum	Audit	Practice Education Facilitator	Biannually	University Standards Group and Trust Governance Group	Education and Learning Manager
All Vocational Learners, Cadets and Care Certificate Learners are supervised and assessed by appropriately qualified and occupationally competent person	On registration	Clinical Education and Work Place Learning Facilitators	As registration	Awarding body external verifier. FE Colleges. Trust Governance Group	Education and Learning Manager



References/ Bibliography

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (2015) *The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives*. Nursing and Midwifery Council. London

Health and Care Professions Council (2015) *Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics*. Health and Care Professions Council. London

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (2008) *Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice*. London

