



Faculty of Health

Mentor / Sign Off Mentor Handbook

BSc (Hons) Nursing RN

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1 Welcome

On behalf of the Faculty and staff at Birmingham City University I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to you. I am pleased that you have chosen to undertake the role of Mentor for our health and social care students.

The University has strong collaborative links with Local Authorities, NHS Trusts, and private sector care providers where our students are placed for practical experience. Underpinning these links is a long-standing culture of ongoing support.

Thus, the Faculty of Health's Department of Practice Learning, and the relevant programme team(s) will support you in providing quality learning opportunities for our students whilst they are undertaking their practice placements.

I hope that you will find working with us as a Mentor a stimulating and rewarding experience, and I wish you every success.

Professor Ian Blair
Executive Dean, Faculty of Health

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3 Birmingham City University Mission Statement

OUR MISSION

To be a powerful force for learning, creativity and enterprise, promoting economic, social and cultural wellbeing.

OUR VISION

We will be recognised regionally, nationally and internationally as a university, which fosters intellectual, critical and creative endeavour, and, through continuous innovation:

- Provides an educational experience of the highest quality with a strong commitment to employability and to flexible and practice-based learning;
- Is an exemplar for engagement with business, the professions and the community;
- Promotes centres of excellence in research and investigative practice;
- Is a force for equality and inclusion.

OUR APPROACH

We will attain this reputation through:

- The value we place on our staff and the expectations we place on them for the highest standards of professionalism and performance;
- Active partnership with the Students' Union to ensure that together we meet students' educational and wider social, cultural, sporting, welfare and personal development needs;
- Innovative use of technology to promote effective student learning and efficient business delivery;
- Continuous development of our portfolio of activities to meet changing needs;
- The development of the estate to achieve a first-class environment;
- A marketing and communications strategy which enables us to engage effectively with staff, partners and the wider community, and to promote the University's capabilities;
- The promotion of sustainability in our policies and activities.

For more information about the University's policies on equal opportunities and diversity see: the University's internet site at <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/jaws>.

4 Introduction to the Mentor Handbook

A student's practice experience is widely acknowledged as being one of the most important parts of the educational preparation process to becoming a health or social care professional. Therefore this Handbook has been developed by a working party (see Appendix 1) consisting of academic staff and practice partners to provide you with an understating of your role in supporting students whilst they are undertaking practice placements. This will enhance your confidence and competence in assuring they are fit for practice.

As a Mentor of students on a programme(s) provided by Birmingham City University, it is important that you know what policies and regulations govern these programmes. Furthermore, it is important for you to understand how these impact upon the experience both of students and of yourself as a Mentor.

Throughout this Handbook we have therefore included important information about some of these policies and regulations, and how to access them. If you are unsure of the meaning of any of the particularly academic language that is used in some of these, please contact your education link colleague.

4.1 Department of Practice Learning (DPL)

The Faculty of Health continues to place significant emphasis on the quality of placements through the creation of the Department of Practice Learning, which brings together placement provision across the Faculty. The relationship between DPL and placement providers is pivotal, in ensuring high quality professional placement provision which is offered to all students undertaking health and social care programmes.

DPL offers support for Mentors through the administration of protocols to provide parity and equity for students. Training for Mentors is also based on University and regulatory body requirements.

Mentors are supported through their initial training (Supporting Learning and Assessment in Practice) and then offered annual up-dates in conjunction with any employer. DPL also publish regular newsletters, and these are available on the website, which has a dedicated page for Mentors.

5 BSc (Hons) Nursing RN Programme

5.1 Programme Overview

This programme has been designed to comply with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards for pre-registration nursing education (2010). A full copy of these standards can be downloaded from the NMC website however; specific elements are included within this handbook.

The required minimum outcome award for a pre-registration nursing programme is a degree in nursing. The NMC (2010) state that degree level registration underpins the level of practice needed for the future, and enables new nurses to work more closely and effectively with other professionals.

There are four fields of nursing: adult, mental health, learning disability and children's. The NMC standards include a competency framework which sets out the standards that every nursing student must acquire before applying to be registered at first level of the nurse's part of the register. This framework comprises four sets of competencies, one for each fields of practice. Each set comprises both generic competencies and field specific competencies which are organised in four domains:

1. Professional Values
2. Communication and Interpersonal Skills
3. Nursing Practice and Decision Making
4. Leadership, Management and Team Working

The generic and field standard for competence for each domain can be found in the NMC Standards for Pre-registration Nursing Education (2010):

<http://standards.nmc-uk.org/Pages/Downloads.aspx>

The programme meets the NMC 2010 requirements in that it is no less than 3 years or 4600 hours in length. It is also designed to ensure a 50 percent theory and 50 percent practice structure. The programme has been developed in consultation with practice partners, students and service users.

5.2 Programme Philosophy

All learning programmes in the Faculty of Health have a philosophy which underpins students' learning and experience. The programme philosophy can be found in appendix 1.

5.3 Programme Aims

The programme aims to prepare students to demonstrate competence and confidence in achieving the NMC generic and field specific standards ensuring they:

- Develop their knowledge, skills and professional values to deliver high quality essential care to all, and deliver complex care to service users in their field of practice.
- Practice in a compassionate, respectful way; maintaining dignity and wellbeing and communicating effectively
- Act on their understanding of how peoples lifestyles, environments and the location of care delivery influences their health and wellbeing
- Seek out every opportunity to promote health and prevent illness.
- Use leadership skills to supervise and manage others and contribute to planning, designing, delivering and improving future services.
- Develop the ability to critically analyse research findings and apply best evidence to their practice.

5.4 Programme Learning Outcomes

1. Students are fit for purpose, practice, professional standing and the academic award
2. Students act to safeguard the public and be responsible and accountable for safe, person centred, evidence based nursing practice
3. Students will work in partnership with other health and social care professional and agencies, service users, carers and families ensuring that decisions about care are shared
4. Students will practice with professionalism and integrity, and work within agreed professional, ethical and legal frameworks and processes to maintain and improve standards

5.5 Programme Content

The programme ensures that key content identified by the NMC (2010) underpins key aspects of practice (appendix 2). It also ensures that programme content is applied within both a generic and field specific context enabling students to meet the essential and immediate needs of all people and the complex needs of people in their chosen field (appendix 3). The programme will deliver content at a suitable academic level for each part of the programme. The content will be sufficient to enable the student to acquire competencies at degree level. The assessment criteria in both theory and practice increases in level of requirement in each year of the programme.

5.6 Standard University Assessment Regulations

Each programme, including assessment in practice, is governed by University Assessment Regulations, to which all staff must adhere. These regulations can be found at the link below:

[website](#)

5.7 Programme Structure

Students will undertake assessments in both theory and practice. Students will undertake six summatively assessed periods of practice learning over the course of the programme (2 in each part of the programme). The theoretical content of the programme is placed into periods of study called modules all of which inform practice assessments. The programme incorporates a **progression point** at the end of the first and second parts of the programme. There is therefore a period of at least four weeks continuous practice learning towards the end of the first and second parts of the programme.

Students must have passed all elements of assessment in theory and practice to progress through these points.

Mentors will judge if the student has reached the required level of performance to progress to the next part of the programme. Evidence from the student's on-going achievement record (OAR) and assessment of practice documents must be used to support this judgement.

There is also a 12 week "sign off" period of practice learning towards the end of the programme to enable safe judgments to be made regarding the achievement of the required standards of competence and effective practice for entry to the NMC register.

Three Year Programme Structure

Part 1: Academic Level 4

Level of Supervision: Direct

Theory Modules: Professional Values & Academic Skills Introduction to Nursing Practice & Decision Making	Practical Placement 1.1	Theory Modules: Health in Society Nursing Practice 1	Practical Placement 1.2
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Part 2: Academic Level 5

Level of Supervision: Close

Theory Modules: Professional Values & Evidence Based Practice Nursing Practice 2	Practical Placement 2.1	Theory Modules: Nursing in Society Nursing Practice 3	Practical Placement 2.2
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Part 3: Academic Level 6

Level of Supervision: Minimal and/or Indirect

Theory Modules: Academic & Practice Enquiry Nursing Practice 4	Practical Placement 3.1	Theory Modules: Transition to Qualified Practitioner	Practical Placement 3.2 (Sign Off)
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5.8 Inter-professional Learning

The Faculty of Health is committed to preparing all students to work inter-professionally. All programmes of study actively encourage students to value the need for, and benefits of, working within an inter-professional framework to provide a holistic approach to person centred care.

Students need to develop the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes needed to work as a team with other health and social care professionals for the best interests of patients / users. Though this process can be supported at University, the best place for students to develop inter-professional skills is in practice.

We need to ensure that students have the opportunity to participate in inter-professional and multi-agency approaches to health and social care, whilst recognising individual scopes of professional practice, and to encourage students to learn from this experience. Mentors play an important part in modelling this approach to learning and practice.

6 Role and Responsibilities of Mentors

6.1 Named Mentor

A Mentor is a registrant who has met the outcomes of stage 2 of the Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice (2008). They facilitate learning, and supervise and assess students in a practice setting. All students undertaking the nursing programme approved by the NMC must be allocated an identified mentor in each period of practice learning.

Mentors have an important role in facilitating a student's ability to learn and apply learning to practice, which has a significant impact on delivering effective clinical and social care. A skilled and competent workforce ensures patient safety, and will recognise and respond to clinical need more appropriately. Therefore the working group has developed a Role Descriptor and Role Guidance for the role of Mentor.

In brief, the role of the mentor is to facilitate appropriate learning experiences for the student, to review progress and to assess achievement.

The full role guidelines for Mentors may be found in appendix 4

All students must be supervised at all times, either directly or indirectly by a mentor or other suitably prepared registered professional. Being a mentor requires commitment. Mentors should not normally support more than three students from any discipline at any point. Practice learning providers must ensure that a mentor is available to the student for at least 40% of the time during periods of practice learning.

Practice learning providers must ensure that students are supervised directly or indirectly at all times during practice learning by a mentor, practice teacher or other suitably prepared registered professional.

6.2 Progression Point 1 (end of part 1 – see point 5.7)

Assessment decisions regarding achievement of practice requirements at the first progression point are normally made by a mentor who is a nurse registered in any of the four fields of practice. Where competencies are transferable across professions these may be assessed by an appropriate registered professional who has been suitably prepared.

6.3 Progression Point 2 (end of part 1 – see point 5.7)

Assessment decisions regarding achievement of practice requirements at the second progression point are normally made by a mentor who is a nurse registered in any of the four fields of practice.

6.4 Sign Off Mentor

A Sign-Off Mentor is a registrant who makes judgements on whether a student has achieved the required standard for safe and effective practice, and can therefore have their qualification recorded on the relevant part of the NMC register. Becoming a “Sign Off Mentor” requires additional training which can be accessed either via practice providers or, in some circumstances, DPL. (see point 7.8 for further role guidance) A Sign Off mentor can be allocated up to 3 students at any period

Nurses and midwives who make judgements about whether a student has achieved the required standards of proficiency for safe and effective practice must be on the same part or sub-part of the register as that which the student is intending to enter.

6.5 Supervised Practice

It is expected that students will also work with a range of staff in addition to mentors, in order to gain experience whilst on placement. At all times, students should be supervised by staff that are appropriately qualified for that practice learning area. It is acknowledged that not all staff involved will have received mentor training, which means that they cannot sign summative assessment documentation. It is, however, desirable for students to gain experience of working within the wider professional team. Where non nurses are supervising students they will have been suitable prepared and supported in that role by DPL.

6.6 Evidence-based practice

To contribute to the establishment and maintenance of evidence-based practice in the practice learning area, mentors will:

- Identify and apply research and evidence-based practice to their area of practice.
- Contribute to strategies to increase or review the evidence-base used to support practice.
- Support students in applying and using an evidence base to their own practice.

6.7 Mentor Accountability

When negotiating activities with students the mentor remains accountable for delegating any task or activity to the student nurse and must be able to:

- i) Justify the decision to allow the student nurse to carry out care.
- ii) Appropriately supervise the student nurse during the execution of care.

6.8 Mentor Updating / Triennial Review

The NMC requires all qualified mentors to maintain and develop their knowledge skills and competence through regular updating.

The Department of Practice Learning offers regular mentor updating sessions at the university, mentors can also access updating sessions within their own organisation. DPL works in partnership with our practice learning providers to ensure consistent information and advice is offered to mentors.

Mentors must participate in annual updating the purpose of which is to ensure that mentors:

- Have current knowledge of NMC approved changes.
- Are able to discuss the implications of changes to NMC requirements.
- Have an opportunity to discuss issues related to mentoring, assessment of competence and fitness for safe and effective practice.

Each mentor should be reviewed every three years (Triennial Review) to ensure that only those who continue to meet the mentor requirements remain on the local register. The nature of this review will be determined by your employer.

6.9 Local Register of Mentors

It is the responsibility of every organisation / placement provider to maintain a local register of qualified Mentors and Sign off Mentors. Registers should include:

- Details of the original Mentor preparation programme.
- Dates of updates that have been undertaken.
- Date of triennial review

6.10 Preparing for the Student

Allocation information from the Department of Practice Learning will provide practice learning areas with dates and names of students due to attend. This should give the practice learning area plenty of notice that a student is due. The coordinator for student placements in your area should notify you that you will be the Mentor for a specific student.

Students are made aware of their allocated practice learning area around 2-4 weeks prior to the start date. They find out their allocation via the university intranet and are advised to make contact with the practice area in advance of the placement commencing. This gives the mentor the opportunity to identify any specific requirements of the practice learning experience (e.g. off duty requirements, specify uniform policy, reasonable adjustments for disclosed disabilities).

6.11 Developing Professional Attitudes

Mentors, as registered professionals, are required by both their regulatory body and their employers to demonstrate attitudes and behaviours, which adhere to the relevant Codes and promote a positive image of their profession and organisation. Students are expected to develop these attitudes and behaviours over the course of their studies by observing this positive role modelling provided by qualified practitioners. Where a Mentor has concerns about the attitudes and behaviours displayed by students, or about the health and fitness of students in terms of occupational health standards, they must discuss it with the student, record it, and report it appropriately, providing feedback to the student and participate in managing the situation through the HEI and Trust policies and procedures.

6.12 Codes of Conduct, Performance and Ethics

All Mentors must adhere to their Codes of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, and act as a role model for students. In addition students must also adhere to their relevant Codes.

http://www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Standards/nmcTheCodeStandardsOfConductPerformanceAndEthicsForNurseSAndMidwives_LargePrintVersion.PDF

<http://www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Guidance/NMC-Guidance-on-professional-conduct-for-nursing-and-midwifery-students.pdf>

7 Practice Learning Opportunities and Assessment

7.1 Overview

The programme will provide 2300 hours of practice learning which will give students the opportunity to learn in direct contact with healthy and ill people and communities. Students will have access to a range of practice learning opportunities across community, hospital and other settings. Students will undertake six summatively assessed periods of practice learning with two in each part of the programme.

7.2 Monitoring student progress and achievement

Mentors should facilitate three progress interviews with their student during any practice learning experience.

As part of this process mentors should provide continuous written and verbal feedback on the student's performance; this may include both positive feedback and highlight areas for improvement.

You will meet formally with your mentor to review your progress at the following points:

1. Initial interview and induction to placement area
2. Interim interview and formative assessment of progress
3. Final interview and summative assessment

A flow chart detailing the assessment procedure to be followed during a practice learning opportunity is detailed in appendix 6.

Mentors should be aware that assessing students' progress and performance in practice is a complex process that involves many different elements. These encompass the intended learning outcomes of the module and programme, assessment purposes, content and methods, criteria and standards. Given the complexity of assessment, it is crucial to strive for an integrated approach, bringing together various members of the team in practice. Mentors should therefore use appropriate strategies which need to:

- Monitor performance of the student over time
- Negotiate clear and achievable goals
- Directly observe student's practice.
- Challenge unacceptable or unsafe practice
- Evaluate student performance

Student nurses' practical ability must be assessed to ensure that they demonstrate the skills, knowledge and professional behaviour necessary to take part in practice without risk to the public.

By the end of the programme of study students must be able to demonstrate that they are fit for practice. This means that students are able to practise safely and effectively without supervision, and have met the standards for competence and all other requirements for registration set out by the NMC Standards for Pre-registration nursing education (2010).

Students must meet the requirements in each practical assessment document in order to progress to subsequent parts and complete the programme.

7.3 Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative assessment is concerned with the development of the student, identifying strengths and areas for development, and providing feedback on their progress through the learning experience. Formative assessment should involve the student in self-assessment as well as a collaborative review of progress with their Mentor. Formative assessment focuses on the learning needs of the particular student to achieve the performance descriptors / criteria for practice. Formative assessment does not contribute to the summative mark / grade awarded to students.

Summative assessment usually takes place at the end of a learning experience, and is used to evaluate a student's achievement of the learning outcomes and competencies. It is decision-making in nature and contributes to the marking / grading of a student. It may well be that summative assessment includes developmental feedback, which the student can use to improve their performance in the future.

7.4 Supernumerary Status

Students undertaking the nursing programme have supernumerary status for the duration of their programme leading to initial registration.

Supernumerary status means students are additional to the workforce requirement and staffing figures. This also means not using students to "fill gaps" in the placement's establishment of staff

Students with supernumerary status have a right to experience effective learning opportunities in placement, and to have their status as students respected. However, they must make an active and evolving contribution to the work of the placement area, to enable them to learn how to care for and work with clients, patients / users of the service provided, and to meet the proficiencies identified by the professional body for the programme of study that they are undertaking. This means that the experiences they gain during practice placements should be determined by their educational needs. This does not mean that students are purely observers. To develop the required skills and achieve the identified learning outcomes, students must participate in clinical activities under direct or indirect supervision of a Mentor.

Students are present in the placement setting as a learner and not as a member of staff. Students shall not as part of their programme of preparation, be employed by any person or body under a contract to provide the professional role that they are being prepared for.

The type of activities that students participate in will vary from placement to placement. Students should be given the opportunity to participate in as many activities as possible. This may mean that they follow patients / service users when they attend clinics, meetings or have consultations with other health or social care professionals. It may also mean that students are given opportunities to participate in a variety of situations that are appropriate to meet their learning needs. It would never be acceptable for students to put patients / user's safety or well being at risk by refusing to provide immediate care that was within their capabilities. Students should discuss the best ways of achieving their learning outcomes with their Mentor and ensure that their practice assessment document(s) are always available for reference.

7.5 Students with Disclosed Disabilities

The must be completed in line with all reasonable adjustments to which students may be entitled if they have a diagnosed disability which has been disclosed, assessed and recognised by the University. The student will require evidence of such entitlement. The reasonable adjustments applied to student placement learning must not detract from the level of competence to be met in order to be successful. Please see initial interview pages of the assessment of practice documents for disability disclosure statements.

Further advice is available from the Faculty of Health Disability Tutor in DPL.

7.6 Risk Assessments

If students are under the age of 18 or pregnant a risk assessment must have been undertaken before they can attend any PLO. If this has not been carried out DPL must be contacted immediately. Any adjustments or recommendations from the assessment can then be considered by your area prior to the student attending.

Students are also advised to disclose any illness or disability that may be a risk during the PLO so that a risk assessment can be undertaken and adjustments recommended by any such assessment can be considered

7.7 Student Attendance

Students are required to undertake 2300 practice hours across the programme and must complete the “Record of Attendance” sheet at the back of each assessment of practice document. You must sign this sheet to confirm the accuracy of the hours that the student has undertaken.

Students must experience 24 hour, 7 day care. This may include a variety of work patterns where relevant to their placement experience including weekends, evenings, nights and bank holidays. The organisation of work patterns should ensure adequate opportunities for learning and effective supervision and ideally to work as many work sessions as possible with their named mentor. Supernumerary status does not imply the right for students to change allocated duty at will, or always to have off-duty / leave requests honoured.

Students will undertake 40 hours of placement learning per week, of which 37.5 hours will follow the work patterns of the practice learning area.

In addition students will undertake 2.5 hours per week to:

- reflect on practice
- source information to enhance their practice
- document progress and achievement during the practice learning opportunity

It is not expected that the student will attend the practice learning area during this 2.5 hours per week.

If students have individual needs which may affect their ability to accommodate certain working patterns they should be directed to the DPL.

7.8 Pathway Experiences

During each placement students may spend up to 2 weeks on suitable pathway experiences. These are experiences that enhance the student’s awareness and understanding of possible services or support networks that contribute to care delivery.

Pathway experiences may either be allocated in advance by Department of Practice Learning and/ or arranged locally during the placement. Students should have a nominated supervisor who should provide feedback on the student’s performance whilst undertaking the experience (Refer to point 6.5)

There is room to record pathway experiences and achievements in the student’s practice learning assessment document, as mentor you should consider the comments of the supervisor from each pathway when providing ongoing feedback to your student. This will ultimately contribute to the student’s final assessment.

7.9 Evidence to support the achievement of practice competences

As previously highlighted in point 5.1, the NMC has defined four Domains of Nursing which students must demonstrate competence in to gain entry to the professional register.

The domains of nursing are:

1. Professional Values
2. Communication and Interpersonal Skills
3. Nursing Practice and Decision Making
4. Leadership, Management and Team Working

Practice assessment documents for this programme have therefore been organised into these four areas for assessment purposes. Each Domain has a set of performance descriptors and a set of skills and attributes that students must achieve to pass the assessment of practice.

The Skills and Attributes sections of this document have been mapped against the principles of the five **Essential Skills Clusters** (ESC's) referred to in the NMC Standards for Pre-registration Nursing Education (2010).

Achievement will be recorded in the following ways:

- A learning log in which a student documents evidence of their
 - knowledge
 - practical ability
 - attitude
- A list of prescribed skills which will be confirmed by the mentor when achieved
- Presentation of a piece of evidence by the student which demonstrates the ability to link practice and theory
- Feedback from service users and their families/carers (point 7.11)
- Feedback from pathway supervisors (point 7.6)

7.10 Level of Supervision

During this programme student nurses are expected to demonstrate that they are progressing toward being able to work as autonomous practitioners by the point at which they register. Therefore the level of supervision mentors are required to provide to students should be adjusted as students' progress through each academic year.

(Please see point 5.7 for programme structure)

Part 1 – Direct Supervision

The mentor is required to ensure the student is directly supervised by a competent individual at all times.

Part 2 - Close Supervision

The NMC defines the year 2 level of supervision as the mentor allowing the student to work more independently with less supervision in a safe and increasingly confident way to extend their knowledge and skills.

Part 3 – Indirect Supervision

The mentor should supervise the student less obtrusively in order ascertain that the student is capable of autonomous practice.

7.11 Level of Performance

In each part of the programme the level of performance which the student is required to achieve increases. **(Please see point 5.7 for programme structure)**

Part 1 = P1 (pass part 1)

Part 2 = P2 (pass part 2)

Part 3 = P3 (pass part 3)

Where a student has exceeded the pass criteria a * may be added to the grade to indicate this.

The full level of performance criteria can be found at the back of each placement document opposite the Final Assessment Sheet where the grade awarded must be recorded by the mentor (Appendix 5)

7.12 Placement Interviews with Students

As a Mentor, you will be required to undertake formal interviews with your student(s) whilst they are undertaking placements. The timing of the interviews will depend on the programme of study that the student is taking.

For pre registration nursing programmes mentors should undertake an initial interview during the first week of placement. This should be followed by a mid point(interim) interview and a final interview during the last week of the placement. Guidance is detailed within the placement assessment document

The interviews are a means of establishing the learning needs of your student, monitoring achievement or lack of achievement, providing feedback and confirming whether proficiencies, competences or standards have been met.

7.13 Service User Feedback

Service users' views must contribute to the assessment of student nurses. In consulting with service users mentors should be guided by the following:

- The service user will only be approached by the mentor for comments
- Contribution by the service user will be entirely voluntary
- Mentors must be mindful of over surveying service users
- Verbal consent will be sought from the service user
- The identity of the service user will be anonymised wherever possible
- If anonymity is not possible the service user can choose not to participate
- Any lack of service user contribution will not prejudice the practical assessment of the student
- The mentor will use professional judgement to evaluate the quality of answers

This means that mentors will record in the student's assessment of practice document that service user experiences have been taken into account in assessing the students practice at both interim and final assessment points.

The assessment of practice document clearly indicates where this feedback should be recorded.

7.14 Principles of giving constructive feedback

Feedback that is accurate, meaningful and given to students in a sensitive way can help reduce any anxiety, increase students' job satisfaction, and motivation to learn and develop. Destructive feedback given in an unskilled manner can leave students feeling very negative and wondering whether there is any point or anything for them to build on. There are some simple steps that Mentors can use to make it a planned and positive experience:

- Be clear about what you want to say in advance
- Ask the student how they feel they are getting on
- Start with positive - acknowledge what they are doing well
- Suggest measures they can take to develop areas in which they are not doing so well
- Encourage them to consolidate their strengths and address their limitations. With a positive approach you can help them learn from both positive and negative experiences
- Be clear, concise and specific. Avoid general comments that do not give enough detail to learn from
- Give alternatives- suggest what could have been done differently
- Encourage the student to own the feedback, be open to their point of view and use your listening skills to establish how what you are saying is affecting them
- Focus on behaviour rather than personality traits
- End the meeting ensuring the student knows what has been decided especially if there are any issues, and with a positive comment on something they do well

Students are required to attend placement in order for the assessment of practice to be undertaken and there may be a professional or programme requirement for a minimum number of hours / days that a student must undertake in practice in order to be considered for the final assessment for a particular placement experience. The minimum number of hours/ days a student must undertake will be identified in the placement document and student programme handbook. Mentors should always sign student's attendance records to ensure that the record is completed and accurate. If students are absent from placement, Mentors should liaise with the Department of Practice Learning / Programme Director or the student's personal tutor.

7.15 Supporting Students who are Failing to Achieve

Effective support is facilitated by identifying failing students as early as possible, and taking appropriate action. This will include, where appropriate, seeking support from practice education and / or University staff. Whatever the specific situation, both students and Mentors need to feel supported, rather than feeling that they are being subjected to further pressure.

- Speak discretely with the student, and help him/her to accept the reality of the situation. Many students are anxious to deny that there is any problem. The student must recognise the problem and decide that s/he wants to resolve it in order for there to be real progress.
- Once the problem has been identified focus on listening to the student, and then be honest and direct in your responses. Offer respect and encouragement. Pay attention to what s/he says about course demands, personal / health problems, etc, and their confidence in working in placement. You may have only seen symptoms of the basic problem, but not have any idea of its source.
- Help the student to create a plan of action, from a reasonable starting place, and with realistic goals. You may obtain assistance from identified practice support staff. Make sure that the student adopts the plan as his/her own set of goals and responsibilities. Offer the student opportunities to make progress, and arrange for these opportunities to be provided. Do not guarantee a pass grade.
- Set regular times for a mutual review of the progress of the action plan. Take care to congratulate the student on progress. If a student is not progressing, or even regressing, be positive, but firm. It will be important to try to address any issues around maintaining the student's motivation. However, do not make negative comments in front of others.
- Do not lower your standards to accommodate a student who is "working hard." This is commendable in the student, but will not help him/her, the profession or the public. Do not give a student a pass grade for trying hard. It only takes her/him to a harder, more impossible level.
- Maintain a professional outlook. If you have followed these guidelines and acted in a genuinely supportive manner, you have done your best. The student is responsible for his/her success or failure.

A flow chart detailing the assessment procedure to be followed during a practice learning opportunity is detailed in appendix 6.

7.16 On-going Achievement Record (OAR) and Sign Off

Student's on an NMC approved pre-registration nursing programme are required to demonstrate ongoing progress towards achieving competence in the four domains of nursing.

At the end of the programme the student must provide evidence of all practical achievements to a sign-off mentor and this ongoing achievement record enables the student to keep a record of these achievements. In order to be able to register with the NMC as a nurse the student **MUST** be assessed and signed off as competent to practice by a sign off mentor.

Students will take the OAR to each practice area to allow the mentor to review comments and achievements from previous practice learning opportunities. In the final practice placement of the programme the student must present the OAR to their nominated sign off mentor to allow them to make a judgment about whether a student has achieved the required standards of competency for safe and effective practice.

Consent from students to share their OAR will have been obtained at the start of the programme and is a condition of enrolment.

The Sign Off Mentor must:

1. Use the OAR in conjunction with the final practical assessment document.
2. Check final assessment and final interview sheets from all previous placements are present and signed by a mentor
3. Check all domains have been passed on each placement
4. Set aside a minimum of one hour per week to:
 - Reflect and give feedback on the student's performance
 - Review additional documents if supplementary information is required e.g. previous practical assessment documents.

The sign off mentor is responsible and accountable for making the final sign off in practice in the practice assessment document, confirming that the student has successfully completed all the practice requirements of the programme (i.e. sign the final declaration).

7.17 Record keeping

As a professional you maintain appropriate standards of record keeping when caring for or working with patients / users. The same standards apply to maintaining students' placement documents. Always adhere to the principles of record keeping. If there is any enquiry about a student's performance or behaviour in practice, you may be asked questions, and if matters have not been documented, then this will leave the situation open to interpretation. Records should:

- be factual, consistent and accurate, written in a way that the meaning is clear;
- be recorded as soon as possible after an event has occurred, providing current information;
- be recorded clearly and in such a manner that the text cannot be erased or deleted without a record of change;
- be recorded in such a manner that any justifiable alterations or additions are dated, timed and signed or clearly attributed to a named person in an identifiable role in such a way that the original entry can still be read clearly;
- be accurately dated, timed and signed, with the signature printed alongside the first entry where this is a written record; Any corrections should not be deleted using correction fluid.
- not include abbreviations, jargon, meaningless phrases, irrelevant speculation, offensive or subjective statements;
- be readable when photocopied or scanned.

In addition, records should:

- be recorded, wherever possible, with student involvement and in terms that the student can understand;
- identify risks and/or problems that have arisen with a student and the action taken to rectify them;
- provide clear evidence of any actions planned and the decisions made with a student.

7.18 How to Avoid Material Error Claims

Under the University regulations, students are entitled to appeal academic and practice decisions where there is evidence to support one of the following:

- An administrative error in the conduct of the assessment;
- A misinterpretation of the assessment regulations;
- Any kind of irregularity in the assessment process that may have influenced the outcome of the assessment.

In practical terms, Mentors should ensure that the assessment process is carried out in accordance with procedures described in the practice documentation that the University issues. More often than not, successful appeals are based on the fact that the documentation was not

completed correctly. Mentors need to ensure that action plans, reviews and final assessments have taken place at agreed times and places.

Other appeals commonly stem from issues of placement duration, where opportunities for assessment are limited. It is thought that this could jeopardise the opportunity for the student to complete their practice outcomes. Periods of re-assessment are also contested where students can prove that they did not work with their Mentor(s) for sufficient time. Mentors should also seek to ensure that they are aware of any reasonable adjustments that have been agreed between the student, University and the placement provider under the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, as failure to do so would be further grounds for appeal. Mentors should seek the advice and support of the designated practice co-ordinator or the University if they are at all concerned about the possibility of any such appeals.

8 Academic and Practice Coursework Deferral or Extension due to Exceptional Circumstances

A student who is unable to attend an invigilated assessment or other form of assessment task or to meet a coursework deadline because of exceptional circumstances may make a request either:

- to defer the attempt at the assessment(s) to a later date i.e. to delay taking the assessment until the next scheduled opportunity. A different assessment task may be set for the deferred assessment;

Or

- for an extension to complete the coursework.

A student must select which of these two remedies he or she is seeking. A request cannot be made for both simultaneously.

Requests for the consideration of exceptional circumstances from students taking programmes offered by a Faculty are considered by the Senate Secretariat, a Division of the Academic Registry and members of the Register maintained by the Student Complaints, Appeals and Discipline Committee (SCAD).

No other body or individual member of staff has the authority to grant a deferral of assessment or an extension to a coursework deadline. Therefore, if a student approaches his / her Mentor with a request for either a deferral or an extension of work, the Mentor should contact the appropriate and named contact at the University for advice.

The University's policy and procedures for such student claims can be found via this link:

[website](#)

8.1 How Students Can Interrupt their Studies

An Interruption of Studies is an approved leave of absence from all study for a defined period. A student who interrupts study must withdraw from all the modules that he or she is studying at the time. He or she cannot interrupt individual modules while continuing to study others. An interruption of studies may be taken for a number of reasons e.g. health, financial, academic or personal reasons.

The term 'interruption of studies' applies to approved absences of 15 working days or more and up to a maximum period of one academic year. An interruption of studies cannot commence fewer than 15 working days before the end of the normal study period for the modules for which the student is registered at the time. Where an interruption of studies is not permitted for this

reason, the student should be advised to submit a claim for exceptional circumstances if s/he believes that the absence will/has adversely affected performance in an assessment or assessments.

From 2009/10 any period of interruption of studies will be included in the calculation of the student's maximum period of registration for any student whose programme is governed by version 4 of the Standard Undergraduate Assessment Regulations. (Interruptions of studies are discounted from the calculation under earlier versions of standard undergraduate level regulations and the Standard Postgraduate Assessment Regulations.) For absences of fewer than 15 working days, the student should be advised to inform his/her programme director and/or personal tutor of the proposed absence and to indicate the likely date of return. The student should also be advised to submit a claim for exceptional circumstances if s/he believes that the absence will adversely affect performance in an assessment or assessments.

The University's full policy on Interruption of Study can be accessed via this link:

Website

8.2 Students Contemplating Withdrawal

Withdrawal is the cessation of study with immediate effect from the date shown on the Student Withdrawal/Interruption of Study Form. A student who has formally withdrawn from his/her programme, or has been withdrawn by the University, is not eligible to attend teaching sessions or to take assessments unless s/he is re-admitted to the programme and re-enrols.

If a student is contemplating withdrawing, staff should make every effort to offer appropriate advice and to make enquiries about whether any additional assistance could be provided that would enable the student to continue on the programme. Students should be advised to:

- consult their Personal Tutor / Programme Director before taking a decision to withdraw;
- contact Student Services for advice about any further assistance that might be available, and about the financial implications of withdrawal or interruption of study.

If an international student is considering withdrawing, s/he must be advised about the implications for his or her visa. Only staff in the International Advice Service (IAS) are permitted to give this advice and so all queries of this nature must be directed to the IAS.

Students enrolled on a programme whose students are subject to Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) or Occupational Health checks should be informed in writing, by the Director of Faculty Administration, that if they take an interruption of studies of nine months or more the University will undertake a new CRB / Occupational Health check, and they cannot resume study until this check has been completed.

The University's full policy on Withdrawal can be accessed via this link:

[website](#)

9 Fitness for Practice and Disciplinary Procedures

9.1 Fitness for Practice

Mentors should be aware that the academic progress of students is governed by the University's standard assessment regulations. However, this programme prepares students for entry to a profession for which academic criteria is not sufficient to ensure suitability for practice. For this programme the University and NMC must also be confident that students are fit to practice their

chosen career. For this reason, Mentors and other practice staff are integral to the process of assessing fitness for practice.

The Faculty has a Policy, complete with procedures, which applies to programmes where there are compulsory integral periods of professional placement, and for which there are behavioural and health requirements to ensure suitability to practice the profession. When there are concerns *at any time* about a student's personal / professional suitability to remain on their programme mentors must raise and escalate these concerns via their local practice education facilitator or DPL. This might happen, for example, when a student

- has physical or mental health problems which may put themselves or others at risk
- demonstrates unprofessional behaviour
- has committed an offence under the University's Student Disciplinary Procedure which raises doubts about professional suitability

This list is not exhaustive and other behaviour may raise concerns about a student's fitness for practice.

Students may also approach their Mentors to request that they support them at a University Committee or Panel (e.g. Extenuating Circumstances Committees). It is perfectly acceptable for a Mentor to support their student in this way, providing there is no conflict of interest (i.e. if the mentor is already involved in the issue concerned).

The full Policy and Procedures may be accessed via this link:

website

9.2 Module Examination Boards

The purpose of these Boards is to discuss, in an equitable, transparent and timely fashion, the progress of all students who have been removed, discontinued or referred from their placement. The overall remit of the committee will be to signpost the most appropriate action for the student. Where students have been removed from placement as a result of professional concerns in relation to the students fitness for practice, these issues will be recorded and discussed, and a decision taken as to whether or not the matter should be referred for further investigation to an Investigating Officer.

9.3 Disciplinary Procedures

Mentors should be aware that students and staff are expected to treat each other with respect and to behave in a manner that creates a harmonious and safe environment, in which everyone can work, study and live. This means acting courteously, complying with any rules and codes of conduct for behaviour, which are laid down, and not behaving in any way that adversely affects the reputation of the University. These requirements extend to times when students are not on the University's premises, such as when they are working in another institution on placement as part of their course or when representing the University at an off campus sporting event.

The University has a Disciplinary Procedure, and it may be accessed via this link:

Website

Behaviour that will cause the formal disciplinary procedure to be invoked includes, but is not limited to:

- violent, threatening, indecent, offensive or reckless behaviour;
- undesignated possession of an offensive weapon on University premises;
- fraud or deception;
- damaging University property;

- theft or misuse of University / placement property;
- action likely to cause injury or impair safety on University premises;
- cheating in an assessment;
- breaching the Code of Conduct relating to Meetings on University Premises, (freedom of speech);
- conduct which constitutes a criminal offence where that conduct takes place on university premises.

If students are found guilty of inappropriate behaviour, penalties include written warnings, recovery of the cost of repairing any damage caused, suspension and expulsion.

9.4 Cheating

Mentors should be aware that the University takes allegations of cheating, in examinations, coursework, or by the falsification of practice documents, very seriously. If there is any issue regarding a student's honesty or integrity, you may be asked questions, or required to provide documentation.

The University has a Disciplinary Procedure that deals with the issue of cheating, and it may be accessed via this link:

Website

An attempt by a student to gain unfair advantage over other students in the completion of an assessment, or to assist someone else to gain an unfair advantage, is also a disciplinary offence. Mentors therefore need to be careful about the amount of help that they give to students.

9.5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important principle in health and social care because it functions to impose a boundary on the amount of personal information and data that can be disclosed without permission and this principle applies to working with students.

However, confidentiality can be countered when there is a public interest in others being protected from harm. The Faculty of Health's policy on Confidentiality may be accessed via this link:

[website](#)

An example of guidance from a regulatory body on professional conduct for students, including the matter of confidentiality, can be accessed via this link:

<http://www.nmc-uk.org/aDisplayDocument.aspx?DocumentID=6572>.

10 Quality and Placements

10.1 Quality Monitoring and Enhancement

The Department of Practice Learning monitors the quality of the placement experiences, which include:

- Use of audit or update of placements
- Liaising with designated practice education facilitators who will advise on suitability of placements and capacity
- Ensuring placements meet educational standards
- Reviewing student's evaluations of placements

- Providing placements with feedback from students evaluations
- Awarding good practice awards to placements and Mentors (Annual Healthcare Awards / “assessors of excellence”)
- Supporting students who have a complaints relating to the practice learning environment
- Contributing to the liaison with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies who monitor and maintain standards

Ideally, each practice placement area will have a designated practice co-ordinator who is responsible for supporting Mentors to provide placements of suitable quality for students.

10.2 Audit

All placement areas are audited on a regular basis, as required by the PSRBs. This audit will require information such as the number of available assessors, the learning opportunities available and risk assessments. Mentors should familiarise themselves with the audit information for their placement area and be prepared to contribute to regular and authentic quality monitoring.

Quality, in placement provision, means the consistent achievement of a standard. In order for this to happen, Mentors need to know what the standard is / is going to be.

<http://www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/Standards/nmcStandardsToSupportLearningAndAssessmentInPractice.pdf>

10.3 Evaluation of the placement area

Students have the opportunity to complete formal evaluations on their placement experience. This may be provided online or in a printed format. Mentors can access a summary of this information from their designated practice co-ordinator. Best practice means that this information will be discussed by the team, and that future learning and action points will be agreed.

Encouraging students to complete these evaluations after their placement will allow placement areas to enhance the learning environment accordingly.

10.4 Practice Learning Area Information

An important part of ongoing quality in placements is that students know what to expect before they come on placement. Mentors should be prepared to participate in regular review and updating of the information which is available to students about their placement area.

[website](#)

10.5 Reliability of Assessments

To be reliable, assessment decisions on students' performance must be consistent as between all mentors and for all students undertaking the same assessment task. In any assessment system, procedures have to be put in place to ensure this. The procedure that the Faculty of Health has in place is called moderation.

The Faculty's policy on moderating student work can be accessed via this link:

Website

10.6 Practicability of Assessments

For assessments to be practicable (i.e. capable of being carried out both efficiently and cost-effectively) there has to be adequate resources and time. When assessing students, Mentors need to have the flexibility to meet the needs of individual candidates.

10.7 Role of External Examiners

The University appoints External Examiners to all of its programmes in order to ensure that they are comparable to similar programmes in other Universities, and that the quality and standards of provision are maintained at an appropriate level. External Examiners **do not** second mark students work. They do, however, see the assessed work of a sample of students across the full range of attainment (including failed work) in order to check the consistency of standards and the marks / grades awarded. They should also meet students and engage with practice in order to find out the views of students and practice partners about the programme under scrutiny.

External Examiners are also required to write formal annual reports on modules and programmes of study that they monitor and they also attend the Examination Boards, where marks / grades are determined and confirmed. Programme teams are required to respond to any issues identified in the External Examiners' reports.

10.8 Raising and Escalating Concerns

As mentors you have a duty to put the interests of the people in your care first and to act to protect them if you consider they may be at risk. It is therefore important that you know how to raise and escalate concerns appropriately. This is also the message given to student nurses during their programme of study and they are therefore encouraged to raise any concerns they have over the standard of care they witness with their mentor, practice learning area manager, practice education facilitator, personal tutor or the DPL. As mentors it is important that you support students if they raise issues with you so that they feel empowered to participate in this professional requirement.

The NMC guidance on Raising and Escalating concerns can be accessed at:

<http://www.nmc-uk.org/Documents/RaisingandEscalatingConcerns/Raising-and-escalating-concerns-guidance-A5.pdf>

Birmingham City University Faculty of Health has a Whistle blowing policy students are made aware of. This can be accessed at:

website

11 How Can Mentors Contribute to the Development of a Programme?

All of our programmes of study are constantly evolving and developing to meet the needs of the service, students and NMC. Changes and developments to programmes are always undertaken with consultation with practice partners; however we are aware that Mentors may also wish to give feedback at other times. The Faculty of Health has a formal programme of quality assurance, which includes contributions from practice; details of this are given below.

If, at any time, Mentors wish to comment on the programme of study with which they are involved, they should contact the Programme Director of the relevant programme of study.

11.1 Boards of Studies

Each programme has its own Board of Studies which meets at least twice a year. The membership of the Board includes the Programme Director, all teaching staff, at least one student representative from each cohort, representatives from practice, including Mentors, and a representative from the library staff.

The purpose of the Board is to maintain the quality of the programme, develop policy to meet the needs of the programme in relation to, amongst other things, learning and teaching and assessment, and to maintain links with bodies, such as practice partners, relevant to the programme.

If Mentors wish to raise an issue at the Board of Studies, they should contact the Programme Director of the relevant programme who will be able to guide them through the process.

11.2 Quality Days

Subject and Programme Quality Days were developed following the 2008 review within the Faculty's Process Redesign Project which noted that programmes and programme teams would benefit from protected time set aside from Examination Boards to discuss with students and practice partners module and programme quality monitoring and enhancement.

Subject Quality Coordinators (SQC) were identified to undertake the role of having overall responsibility for quality monitoring and enhancement of modules of study within the same subject area. The role of SQCs differs from Programme Directors (PDs) in this respect.

Mentors are regarded as playing a very important role in overseeing the quality of the student learning experience and the development of programmes to enhance knowledge and skills. Therefore you are encouraged to participate in these days whenever possible.

11.3 Healthcare Quality (Strategic) Group and Profession Specific Groups

NHS West Midlands Strategic Health Authority (SHA) receives funding directly from the Department of Health to fund educational provision across the West Midlands region. Education Commissioning for Quality (ECQ) is a process designed to ensure that the provision of healthcare education within NHS West Midlands is reviewed and quality assured, and is meeting the requirements of the SHA. Mechanisms are in place to improve and enhance the provision of all educational programmes, and also ensure exemplary best practice is shared.

The ECQ process is important, as it

- Assures the SHA that we provide value for money.
- Highlights areas of concern with quality of education provision, and allows interventions to be put in place to ensure that all educational and placement providers are working towards agreed standards of provision.
- Demonstrates that the mechanisms are in place to improve and enhance the provision of all educational programmes.
- Allows for the formal identification of areas where educational provision can be enhanced beyond currently accepted minimum standards.
- Identifies areas of exemplary practice, and acts as a mechanism to capture and share this best practice.

11.3.1 Healthcare (Strategic) Quality Group (HQQ)

Within this ECQ process, the strategic development and overarching operational management of the health and social care education provision given by Birmingham City University and its partners is the responsibility of the HQG. Membership is drawn from Faculty of Health staff,

senior practice staff representing placement providers, and the SHA. The remit of the HQG is to develop on-going quality monitoring and enhancement systems and processes in order to implement policies for the advancement of the education and training of health and social care professionals, ensuring that students are Fit for Practice, Fit for Purpose and Fit for Award.

11.3.2 Profession Specific Groups (PSGs)

In order to facilitate and ensure the attention to detail which is crucial in the OQME process, the HQG established a structure whereby there are seven PSGs which meet regularly. The PSGs are comprised of Faculty of Health staff and practice partners. They feed the results of discussions and collaborations, as well as requests and decisions, into the agenda of the HQG. They also play a key role in disseminating concerns, good practice and quality monitoring tasks from the HQG to practice partners across professions and placement areas.

Key to the carrying out of this remit, commitment to the quality of training and support for Mentors is one of the major concerns of the HQG. Mentors can draw the attention of the HQG to any concerns, or other issues that they consider important, through their designated practice co-ordinator. Matters can be brought directly to the HQG or via the appropriate PSG.

11.4 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Requirements

This programme is governed by standards set by The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). It is important that you are aware of the standards and circulars that relate to the programme of study where you are mentoring students. The Standards for pre-registration nursing education can be accessed here:

<http://standards.nmc-uk.org/Pages/Downloads.aspx>

12 What University Support and Guidance is Available to Students?

12.1 Library and Learning Resources

The University's libraries offer a range of printed and electronic resources and services to help students through their programme.

There are two libraries with resources for Faculty of Health students sited at different University locations: Kenrick library is the largest of the University's libraries. It is located on the City North Campus; the Mary Seacole library is situated at the Edgbaston campus. Both libraries have a wide range of stock supporting the subjects taught at each site. Long opening hours mean that the libraries are available for use during the day, the evening and the weekend.

12.2 Student Services

Counselling

This is a self-referral service that students can access, should they find themselves faced with personal problems or difficulties which threaten to affect their well-being or ability to study. Counsellors offer a one to one confidential service designed to help students to find ways of managing. There are occasional group sessions on issues such as anxiety management and self-help information and advice are available in the form of leaflets which cover a wide range of problems such as stress, depression and eating disorders.

Mental Health Support

This is also a self-referral service that students can access. Our Faculty Mental Health Advisors focus on information giving and advice in relation to the assessment of academic support needs, and liaison within the University to ensure that these needs are met. They work closely with the

Disability Advisors. Students can get help with practical support for a range of mental health issues.

Disability Support

Although students cannot be made to disclose any disabilities, at Birmingham City University we think it is important that students feel they can tell us about any disability they may have. We regard disclosure of a disability as a positive thing, because once we are aware of a disability, we can try to support individual needs.

Disability Advisors are on hand to support any student with a disability and they are able to give specific guidance to teaching staff on alternative teaching methods and assessments if required. The personal assistance scheme recruits and trains students as non-medical support workers for disabled students, and can help students find professional support such as BSL Interpreters and Dyslexia Tutors.

The Faculty has produced a Dyslexia Tool Kit for use in placement. It can be accessed via this link:

[website](#)

Health Care

There are medical rooms at both City North and Edgbaston Campuses. Nurses are available without appointment to give advice on health related issues, immunisation, contraception and sexual health. They can also treat minor ailments and monitor existing conditions. Doctors hold surgeries at the medical rooms during term-time and appointments can be made at any Student Services Reception.

Religious and Spiritual Support

The multi-faith Chaplaincy team is available 24 hours a day to offer welfare advice and support to students of all faiths or none. Mentors should be prepared to direct students to similar facilities in the placement area.

Child Care

The University has one nursery, located at the City North Campus. They aim to provide a stimulating environment for children aged between 6 months and 5 years. The nursery offers a range of age-appropriate indoor and outdoor activities. The nursery operates during week days only, and is open from 7.30 am until 5.45 pm each day. The nursery is closed on Bank Holidays and for two weeks at the time of the Christmas break.

Student Complaints Procedure

The University wants to know if students are unhappy about any aspect of their educational experience provided by Birmingham City University, and has procedures to use to raise issues when necessary. It is the policy of the University to resolve as quickly and fairly as possible any grievance a student may have about treatment by any staff member of the University or by the Students' Union.

If students are unhappy about any aspects of their experience provided by Birmingham City University, as a first step, they should raise the issues with their personal tutor. If the tutor is unable to resolve matters to their satisfaction, it may be appropriate to use the University's formal complaints procedure. Students can get details of the formal procedure from the Director of Faculty Administration. Before starting the formal process, they are strongly advised to contact the Advice

Centre of the Students' Union who can discuss their case with them and advise on the processes involved in making a complaint.

13 Conclusion

We hope that this Mentors Handbook has provided you with the opportunity to understand your role and responsibilities so that you can undertake your role confidently and competently.

We also hope that it has provided you with sufficient information about University and Faculty policies, guidelines and procedures to enable you to understand the impact that they have on placement issues and your role as a Mentor.

If you would like to discuss any further issues in relation to your role and responsibility please contact either the Programme Director or the Department of Practice Learning.

Appendix 1

BSc (Hons) Nursing RN - Programme Philosophy

The philosophy underpinning this nursing programme reflects the NMC Standards (2010) and the Faculty of Health Strategic Plan.

Nursing is both a profession and a discipline that is responsive to changing health needs, developing priorities and expectations in health and health care. It is concerned with human experiences and responses for the need of health promotion, resolution of illness, or end-of-life care within the context of individuals, families, groups, and communities across the life span.

Nursing, as a scientific discipline, requires critical analysis, problem solving and the use of an evidence base in ethical decision making. The art of nursing lies in applying the principles of nursing theory in practice to design and deliver individualised care with the ability to lead, delegate, supervise, manage and question other nurses, and health and social care professions to ensure the delivery of high quality care in rapidly changing environments and technical advances.

This programme places theory and practice as equal in developing graduates for entry to the professional register and employment whose professional values comply with the Code (NMC 2008). Professional growth and practical skills will be developed in achieving generic and field-specific competencies ensuring that each student has a commitment to life-long learning through preceptorship and ongoing professional development.

Practice learning opportunities will take place in diverse inclusive environments in a range of settings to reflect how future services are likely to be delivered. A hub and spoke model will be used to support students whilst they are undertaking placement learning opportunities whereby they will learn from a range of professionals and be supervised and assessed by mentors and sign off mentors. Thus acknowledging future public health priorities, addressing the challenges of long term conditions, an ageing population and providing more care outside hospitals.

Students' learning experiences are gained through interprofessional learning where students actively learn together through an exchange of knowledge, understanding, and actively exploring their ethical and attitudinal perspectives so that they will be 'collaborative practice ready' (WHO 2010) with the aim of improving collaboration and healthcare outcomes.

The Faculty of Health believes that education is based on humanistic and pedagogical approaches that foster critical thinking, reflection and promote awareness of social and cultural diversity among individuals.

Each student is seen as a unique person with special abilities, needs, and goals and is an active participant who assumes gradual increasing responsibility for their own learning. Cultural diversity, varying life experiences, and changing socioeconomic factors affect each student differently. To this end, the Faculty endeavours to meet the needs of each student and provide a supportive environment that facilitates learning experiences to assist students to achieve their full potential. The acquisition of professional knowledge and the development of clinical competence occur through active involvement of the student in the learning process. Students will assume primary responsibility for their learning, while the Faculty provides support and learning opportunities for knowledge acquisition and professional role development in partnership with our practice partners, users, and carers.

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2010). *Standards for pre-registration nursing education*. London: NMC.

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2008). *The Code: Standards for Conduct, Ethics and Performance of Nurses and Midwives*. London: NMC.

World Health Organisation (2010). *Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education & collaborative Practice*. WHO> Geneva.

Appendix 2

Programme providers must ensure that the following content is included and underpins key aspects of practice as listed in the Standards for Pre-registration Nursing Education (NMC 2010) R5.6.2 (Appendix 3):

- Theories of nursing and theories of nursing practice
- Research methods and use of evidence
- Professional codes, ethics, law and humanities
- Communication and healthcare informatics
- Life sciences (including anatomy and physiology)
- Pharmacology and medicines management
- Social, health and behavioural sciences
- Principles of national and international health policy, including public health
- Principles of supervision, leadership and management
- Principles of organisational structures, systems and processes
- Causes of common health conditions and the interaction between physical and mental health and illness
- Best practice
- Healthcare Technology
- Essential first aid and incident management.

Appendix 3

Taken from the Standards for Pre-registration Nursing Education (NMC 2010) R.5.6.2:

Programme providers must ensure that programme content is applied within both a generic and field specific context enabling students to meet the essential and immediate needs of all people and the complex needs of people in their chosen field in relation to:

- Communication, compassion and dignity
- Emotional support
- Equality, diversity, inclusiveness and rights
- Identity, appearance and self-worth
- Autonomy, independence and self-care
- Public health and promoting health and wellbeing
- Maintaining a safe environment
- Eating, drinking, nutrition and hydration
- Comfort and sleep
- Moving and positioning
- Continence promotion and bowel and bladder care
- Skin health and wound management
- Infection prevention and control
- Clinical observation, assessment, critical thinking and decision-making
- Symptom management, such as anxiety, anger, thirst, pain and breathlessness
- Risk management
- Medicines management
- Information management
- Supervising, leading, managing and promoting best practice.

Appendix 4



Guidelines for “Mentor” Roles and Responsibilities

Introduction

There is no standardised terminology applied to mentoring because the definition depends upon why, where, and with whom it is being used. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies (PSRBs) use terminology specific to each profession. However, what all professions have in common is the commitment to teach, support, coach, facilitate, assess, and supervise students in practice, providing professional role modelling to ensure that they are fit for practice. This is supported by models advocating self-directed, evidence-based and problem-based learning.

A multi-professional working group of academic staff and practice partners has considered the various definitions used, and has agreed that there needs to be a clear role descriptor and guidance, with an agreed title, applied to this role. Therefore the term “Mentor” will be used within the Faculty of Health unless there is a specific mandatory requirement from a PSRB.

A mentor is a registrant who has successfully completed an approved preparation course / programme that is required by their professional body and achieved the knowledge, skills and competence to undertake the assessment of a student’s fitness for practice. Mentors are accountable for the decisions made about a student’s competence and must have “due regard”.¹

However, where the mentor role is a standard set by a professional body, a mentor who applies due regard must be on the same part or sub-part of a professional register and working in the same field of practice as the student and has ultimate responsibility for signing off proficiencies / standards / competencies.

Where the mentor role is a standard set by a professional body, a mentor who applies due regard must be on the same part or sub-part of a professional register and working in the same field of practice as the student, and will have ultimate responsibility for signing off overall proficiencies / standards / competencies.

It is important that mentors are there to support students as well as to ensure professional standards are maintained and evidenced by students.

The conduct of meetings

Mentors and students should expect to be treated with courtesy and mutual respect.

- The mentor and the student should ensure that any disruptions are minimal throughout any

¹ Due Regard: The Faculty of Health defines this to mean that the Mentor has the skills required to support the placement learning outcomes and assess the component skills related to those outcomes; has the experience and expertise to supervise and monitor the student’s progress throughout the placement period; and, where relevant, is from the same part of the register and field of practice as the student.

meeting (e.g. not answering phones or emails).

- Mentors should be compassionate, tactful, approachable and consistent in their dealings with students. Students should feel valued and it is important to remember that a student may have different requirements from one meeting to the next and also different requirements from those of their peers.

Confidentiality

Specific matters raised in a student-mentor meeting are confidential.

- Mentors must inform students that the confidential nature of the meeting may be breached if the student or the mentor wishes a third party to be present (i.e. if the student or the mentor needs additional support or advice from a university tutor, Placement Practice Manager (PPM), union representative or other individual). Third parties may attend the meeting only if agreed by both parties.
- Mentors must inform students that although they will always endeavour to place the best interests of the student first, there may be rare occasions when they believe that the content of the discussion is detrimental to the student's health and well being or public safety and should be taken beyond the meeting. In such circumstances, the mentor must make clear to the student the nature of any confidentiality being offered. If confidentiality must be breached, advice should be sought from the relevant staff in the placement and / or University.
- A record of all formal meetings, including telephone and electronic communication should be kept within the student's practice documentation. The student is entitled to request a copy of any record, if this is not already in their practice documentation.
- Enquiries from parents and other family members in relation to students need to be referred to the University.

Additional support, advice and guidance

Mentors should be prepared to assist students in seeking guidance from the appropriate source(s) on a range of pastoral matters. These matters may include homesickness, loneliness, relationship issues, bullying, bereavement, health issues, concerns relating to academic ability, and financial issues.

Where the mentor considers it appropriate, they may advise that the student seeks additional support from individuals or support services more appropriate to the specific requirements of the student, which are available in the student handbook.

Students may approach their mentors to request that they support them at a University Committee or Panel (e.g. Extenuating Circumstances Committees). It is perfectly acceptable for a mentor to support their student in this way providing there is no conflict of interest (i.e. if the mentor is already involved in the issue concerned).

Professional Body Requirements

Practitioners who undertake the role of mentor for students on programmes approved by PSRBs (such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council, General Social Care Council and Health Professions Council) must fulfill the following criteria:

- Have developed their knowledge, skills and competence beyond registration, and be registered for a minimum of one year, or in accordance with their professional body requirements.
- Have the ability to select, support and assess a range of learning opportunities in their area of practice for students undertaking programmes approved by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.
- Be able to support learning in inter-professional environments, selecting and supporting a range of learning opportunities for students from other professions, and supporting the assessment of other professionals who are under the overall supervision of an experienced assessor from that profession.

- Be able to make judgments about achieving competence / proficiency / standards by students undertaking a programme of study.
- Adhere to the requirements where a professional, statutory or regulatory body has approved a programme of study, and where there is a mandatory requirement for mentors to be on the same part of the register and in the same field of practice as that which the student intends to enter.
- Be accountable for making decisions about a student's fitness for practice in accordance with professional, statutory and regulatory body Codes of Practice and Conduct.

GSCC requirements and standards: (<http://www.gsccl.org.uk/Home/>)

HPC requirements and standards: (<http://www.hpc-uk.org/>)

NMC requirements and standards: (<http://www.nmc-uk.org/>)

For some programmes there is a requirement for Mentors to sign off proficiency at the end of a programme confirming eligibility to enter the professional register (Sign off Mentor).

It is a Nursing and Midwifery Council requirement that all midwife Mentors must have met the additional criteria for Sign off Mentor. This also applies to Mentors who sign off the final placement document of a pre-registration student nurse. Practice Teachers have the responsibility for signing off Specialist Community Public Health Nurse Students. NMC Sign off Mentors must also satisfy the requirement for due regard.

Establishing effective working relationships

Mentors will have effective professional and inter professional working relationships to support learning for students whose name will be entered on to a professional register or where placement learning is part of an academic programme.

Mentors will:

- Organise and coordinate students' day to day learning opportunities and activities in practice.
- Have knowledge and understanding of factors that influence how students integrate into practice settings, and provide ongoing and constructive support to facilitate transition from one learning environment to another.
- Supervise students in learning situations and provide them with constructive feedback on their achievements.
- Engage with students to apply and monitor the learning outcomes provided to the particular practice setting.
- Assess a student's total performance – including skills, knowledge applied to practice, values, attitudes and behaviours relevant to the stage of the programme.
- Liaise with others where relevant (e.g. mentors, sign-off mentors, practice facilitators, practice placement managers, practice teachers, personal tutors, programme directors and the Department of Practice Learning personnel) to provide feedback, identify any concerns about a student's performance and implement an agreed action plan as appropriate.

Facilitation of learning

Mentors will facilitate students' learning in practice by:

- Using their knowledge of the student's stage of learning to select appropriate learning opportunities to meet their individual needs.
- Facilitating the selection of appropriate learning strategies to integrate learning from practice and academic experiences.

- Supporting students in critically reflecting upon their learning experiences in order to enhance future learning.

Assessment and Accountability

Mentors will undertake assessment of students' practice and be accountable for the decisions made by:

- Having an in-depth knowledge and understanding of their accountability at every stage of a student's programme of learning. Be accountable to the Professional Body for the decision they must make to pass or fail a student when assessing proficiency / standards / competency requirements.
- Fostering professional growth, personal development and accountability through support of students in practice.
- Demonstrating a breadth of understanding of assessment strategies and the ability to contribute to the total assessment process as part of the learning and teaching team.
- Ensuring they meet with students as defined in the students' practice learning documents, which may be initial, midway and final assessments.
- Providing constructive feedback to students and assist them in identifying future learning needs and actions.
- Managing failing students according to due process (which may include the production of co-operative action planning with other team members) so that they may enhance their performance and capabilities for safe and effective practice or be able to understand their failure and the implications of this for their future practice.
- Being accountable for confirming that students have met, or not met, the professional body standards / competencies / proficiencies as required in practice.
- Maintaining contemporaneous and factual records of each student's achievements in practice and signing their practice assessment / attendance documentation to indicate that they have met the programme and professional body requirements and are fit for practice.

Evaluation of learning

Mentors will:

- Contribute to the evaluation of student learning and assessment experiences – proposing any aspects for change resulting from the evaluation.
- Participate in self evaluation to facilitate their personal development, and contribute to the development of peers.

Context of practice

In order for students to gain a breadth of experience whilst in practice, identified learning opportunities outside the immediate placement are encouraged so they may gain valuable insights into different aspects of voluntary, statutory and regulatory work as well as inter-professional learning opportunities.

The facilitation of such learning opportunities will be the responsibility of the mentor, observing due regard where required.

To achieve this, mentors will:

- Contribute to the development of a safe environment in which efficient care is achieved, an effective learning environment is maintained, and effective practice is fostered, implemented, evaluated and disseminated.
- Set and maintain professional boundaries that are sufficiently flexible to enable inter-professional care and pathways.
- Support students in identifying ways in which policy and legislation impacts upon practice.

- Cases of students reporting, or being reported for, sub-standard practice will be dealt with through the appropriate placement and University procedures. Mentors should be supportive of students throughout the process.

Evidence-based practice

To contribute to the establishment and maintenance of evidence-based practice in the practice placement area, mentors will:

- Identify and apply research and evidence-based practice to their area of practice.
- Contribute to strategies to increase or review the evidence-base used to support practice.
- Support students in applying and using an evidence base to their own practice.

Continuing Professional Development

Mentors are required to update their knowledge and skills annually where required by a professional body. This can be undertaken in a variety of ways but must meet the requirements of the relevant PSRB e.g. NMC registrants are required to have a face-to-face update annually.

- Group Update – by attending a planned session organized by the Department of Practice Learning
- Group Update – by attending a planned update session at work, organized by the PPM/Practice education support staff.
- Update via School of Professional Practice meetings, Programme Team meetings or Subject / Programme Quality Days
- Using material from the Department of Practice Learning Newsletter to demonstrate updating.
- Update On Line
- Update: one to one – For some staff, these updates may be preferable dependent on their needs and the needs of the placement. This can be discussed with the Practice Placement Manager or Practice education support staff.

The Faculty of Health, in agreement with practice partners, recommends face to face delivery on an annual basis, to ensure that Mentors are familiar with changes and developments in the programmes of study where they are supporting students.

Department of Practice Learning / Quality Office
September 2009

Appendix 5

Year 1: Required Level of Performance: Practice, Knowledge & Attitude

In order to be awarded a “Pass” grade the student must be consistently achieving the pass criteria indicated below by the end of the placement:

Level of Supervision: Direct

Pass (P1)	Unsuccessful (U1)
<p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participates • Actively engages with service users • Delivers care safely • Expresses self with clarity and honesty • Uses language appropriate to the situation • Performs specified skills with few prompts • Organises self • Performs with an awareness of legal and professional limitations • Adheres to the NMC Guidance on professional conduct for nursing and midwifery students (2010) <p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a grasp of the theory which underpins routine practices • Asks questions when unsure • Can make some connections between pieces of information • Can offer explanations for the activities undertaken • Shows an awareness of how nursing knowledge and research influence the way care is planned and delivered <p>Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate professional attitude • Considers the patient first • Recognises appropriateness of own actions • Demonstrates self awareness • Responds appropriately to feedback • Commitment to professional development 	<p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not routinely participate or engage with service users • Unsafe care delivery • Lacks self organisation • Requires repeated prompting in familiar tasks • Does not express self with clarity or honesty • Inappropriate use of language • Acts outside professional and legal limitations. • Does not adhere to the NMC Guidance on professional conduct for nursing and midwifery students (2010) <p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks essential knowledge • Does not ask questions • Has no awareness of the rationale for care • Does not make connections between pieces of information <p>Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an unprofessional attitude • Does not consider the patient first • Unaware of own inappropriate responses • Lacks self awareness • Unprofessional response to feedback • Uncommitted
Pass* (P1*)	Absent (A)
The student has exceeded the pass criteria indicated above	A decision cannot be made about the student’s ability because of insufficient attendance.

Year 2: Required Level of Performance: Practice, Knowledge & Attitude

In order to be awarded a “Pass” grade the student must be consistently achieving the pass criteria indicated below by the end of the placement:

Level of Supervision: Close

Pass (P2)	Unsuccessful (U2)
<p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively participates• Actively engages with service users• Delivers integrated care safely• Organises self• Does not require prompting in routine situations• Responds effectively to individual situations in a timely manner• Expresses self with clarity and honesty• Uses language appropriate to the situation• Performs with an awareness of legal and professional limitations.• Adheres to the NMC Guidance on professional conduct for nursing and midwifery students (2010) <p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relates knowledge correctly to practical situations• Asks pertinent questions• Makes connections between relevant pieces of information• Offers rationale for practice which includes evidence and/or research• Questions nursing assumptions and challenges these where appropriate <p>Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriate professional attitude• Considers the patient first• Recognises appropriateness of own actions• Demonstrates self awareness• Responds appropriately to feedback• Commitment to professional development	<p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not routinely participate or engage with service users• Unsafe care delivery requires direct supervision• Disorganised• Does not act on own initiative in familiar tasks• Evades new experiences• Requires repeated prompting in familiar tasks• Wastes resources repeatedly• Slow to respond• Uncoordinated in familiar tasks• Does not express self with clarity• Inappropriate use of language• Acts outside own professional limitations• Does not adhere to the NMC Guidance on professional conduct for nursing and midwifery students (2010) <p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lacks essential knowledge• Does not make connections between pieces of information• Does not relate knowledge correctly to practical situations• Does not offer rationale which incorporates evidence and/or research• Accepts all practice without question <p>Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Displays an unprofessional attitude• Does not consider the patient first• Lacks self awareness• Unprofessional response to feedback• Uncommitted
Pass* (P2*)	Absent (A)
The student has exceeded the pass criteria indicated above	A decision cannot be made about the student's ability because of insufficient attendance.

Year 3: Required Level of Performance: Practice, Knowledge & Attitude

In order to be awarded a “Pass” grade the student must be consistently achieving the pass criteria indicated below by the end of the placement:

Level of supervision: Minimal and/or indirect.

Pass (P3)	Unsuccessful (U3)
<p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively participates• Actively engages with service users• Delivers integrated care safely• Performs with an awareness of legal and professional limitations• Plan and organise activities independently and efficiently• Initiates activities independently• Able to lead practice• Does not require prompting in routine situations• Responds effectively to individual situations in a timely manner• Performs in a fluid and co-ordinated way• Performs efficiently and with dexterity• Articulate and honest• Uses language appropriate to the situation <p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relates knowledge correctly to practical situations• Uses knowledge to make decisions and problem solve• Knowledge is interconnected and structured• Inter-relates pieces of information and draw inferences from these• Questions nursing assumptions and challenges these where appropriate• Make judgements based on best evidence/research <p>Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriate professional attitude• Considers the patient first• Assimilates the centrality of the patient• Recognises appropriateness of own actions• Demonstrates self awareness• Responds appropriately to feedback• Commitment to professional development	<p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not routinely participate• Does not engage with service users• Unsafe care delivery / requires direct or close supervision• Practice lacks coherence• Acts outside own professional limitations• Disorganised in planning, initiating or leading activities.• Does not act on own initiative• Evades responsibility• Requires prompting regularly• Wastes resources• Slow to respond• Uncoordinated• Cannot express self with clarity• Inappropriate use of language• Does not adhere to the NMC Guidance on professional conduct for nursing and midwifery students (2010) <p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lacks appropriate knowledge• Does not relate knowledge to practice• Unable to make knowledge based decisions• Does not draw links from related information• Accepts all practice without question• Demonstrates poor independent judgement• Does not consider best evidence/ research when making decisions <p>Attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor professional attitude• Does not consider the patient first• Unaware of own inappropriate responses• Lacks self awareness• Unprofessional response to feedback• Uncommitted
Pass* (P3*)	Absent (A)
The student has exceeded the pass criteria indicated above	A decision cannot be made about the student's ability because of insufficient attendance.

Appendix 6

Flow Chart Practical Assessment Process **MENTORS RESPONSIBILITIES**

Interview	Content	Considerations	Action
Initial	<p>Introduce student to placement</p> <p>Review Ongoing Achievement Record</p> <p>Discuss the students initial development plan</p> <p>Complete initial interview sheets</p>	<p>Has the meeting taken place in week 1?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">No →</p> <p>Do previous mentors indicate student's practice has been satisfactory?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>Contact PPM &/or DPL</p> <p>Discuss concerns raised by previous mentors with student and agree a plan to address these, document this in the initial development plan.</p>
	↓	←	←
Interim	<p>Review Student progress - consider feedback from pathway experiences and service users</p> <p>Discuss achievements and ongoing learning needs</p> <p>Indicate to student projected grade</p> <p>Plan to help student develop further</p> <p>Complete interim assessment sheets</p>	<p>Has student recorded evidence of achievement?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">No →</p> <p>Is student progressing to the required standard?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>Inform PPM &/or DPL</p> <p>Draw up and implement intermediate action plan to help student to achieve</p>
	↓	←	←
Final	<p>Review Student progress - consider feedback from pathway experiences and service users</p> <p>Provide student with feedback about achievements and any ongoing learning needs</p> <p>Complete final interview sheets</p>	<p>Has student recorded evidence of achievement?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">No →</p> <p>Is student at the standard required to pass?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>Inform PPM &/or DPL</p> <p>Inform student and provide formal statement indicating reasons why U grade was awarded</p> <p>Retain student practical assessment document and give to PPM</p>
		↓	↓
		Student passes placement and progresses	Student is awarded Unsuccessful grade for practical assessment.