

## Policy relating to academic support in practice settings for students & staff

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- Policy:** This policy outlines for academics, students and practice staff the provision of student support available from academics in placement areas. Each academic staff member is required to undertake teaching activities of which teaching in practice settings normally constitutes 0.4 of their total teaching hours
- Purpose:** To ensure all students receive academic support whilst undertaking practice experiences and to support all relevant parties by providing a clear strategy of action.
- Scope:** All academic staff of the School.
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### 1. Introduction

This policy has been designed to ensure that all academic staff, students and practice staff are knowledgeable about the School policy towards ensuring a standard of academic support for students whilst on placement.

It identifies the nature and scope of academic support available to students and practice staff that they might reasonably receive from academic members of the School. This support includes the following as a minimum standard:

- Each Community of Practice has a lead academic responsible as a **Lecturer in Practice** for liaising with the practice experience manager regarding day to day issues and emergency situations.
- Each placement area will have a named academic (a link lecturer) providing support to students and staff;
- The name of the academic, visiting information and contact details will be displayed in a prominent place in the placement area and students will receive these details in the placement welcome information;
- The academic provides **students** during their practice experience with academic support aimed at helping them integrate theory with practice through tutorials, reflection sessions or seminars. The academic may also provide interim pastoral support until students are able to contact their personal tutor;
- The academic provides **practice staff** with academic support aimed at promoting understanding of the curriculum, implementing the assessment of practice strategies, advising staff on student conduct issues and advising them on the range of continuing professional development programmes available within the Institute of Health Sciences and the St Bartholomew School of Nursing and Midwifery.
- The academic shares responsibility for Ongoing Quality Monitoring and Enhancement of their link placements with their placement colleagues.

**N.B.** Support for students and practice staff regarding student practice experience (e.g. allocations) requests, student or staff conduct issues can be directed to the Lecturer in Practice for the Community of Practice, or to the relevant Practice Experience Manager as indicated in the Communication Pathway (see *Guidelines, Policies & Procedures Pre-registration Midwifery and Nursing Students in Practice Placements*)

### 3. Allocation of Placement links

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- A database of placement areas is held by the Associate Dean for Practice Education, along with the names of academics who are the link lecturers. This is updated each term with the placement hours returns.
- Staff who do not hold a practice placement link should contact the Associate Dean to negotiate their link within a Community of Practice where there are vacancies and will contact the relevant Lecturer in Practice;
- The Lecturer in Practice, the chair of the Educational Trust team/Community of Practice team and the academic will agree the most suitable practice placement for that person to provide academic support;
- The Lecturer in Practice with the chair of the Educational Trust team will arrange an **orientation and induction programme** for the academic, this will include a meeting with the relevant Practice Experience Manager and the placement manager/ midwife/ charge nurse as appropriate;
- The academic should arrange for their **details** and relevant information to be prepared to go on the education notice board in the practice setting and to go in the practice setting welcome information for students.
- Prior to a period of **leave** the academic must inform the staff of the practice setting of arrangements they have made to provide link lecturer cover and provide a copy of this information to the relevant Lecturer in Practice;
- During a period of sickness the Lecturer in Practice will arrange for suitable academic support for the practice area;
- Academics are required to keep a **record of their linked practice setting contact hours**, which are calculated in the same way as campus contact hours, and each Department Head is required to return this information at the end of each term to the Systems Manager for Practice Education;
- Academic staff will have their practice link activities considered during their **performance review** in the same manner as their campus activities;
- Under the terms of the Partnership Agreement academics have an **honorary contract** with the placement provider that provides indemnity insurance against normal activities as identified below or negotiated individually with the placement staff. However this does not replace the normal indemnity insurance required of registered nurses, midwives and specialist community public health nurses under the terms of their Code of Professional Conduct.
- If an academic wishes to **change or discontinue their practice placement link** they must first discuss this with the Lecturer in Practice for the Community of Practice or the chair of the Educational Trust team/ Community of Practice who will refer the matter to the Associate Dean for Practice Education. The academic should also raise the matter with their line manager.
- If an academic is seen not to be fulfilling their link lecturer responsibilities the Chair of the Educational Trust team/Community of Practice, in collaboration with the Link lecturer will write a memo to the Associate Dean for Practice Education who will explore the matter with the academic's head of department

#### 4. Role and responsibilities of the academic in practice (link lecturer)

- The academic in practice is expected to **visit** their placement area no less than twice a month during students' practice placement experiences
- These visits should be well publicised in advance in writing as well as verbally to the placement staff;
- As far as possible the practice staff should ensure there are students on duty during the times the academic is on the placement
- The academic provides practice staff with information about current developments in students' programme; advice regarding assessment of students' progress; advice about any issues relating to individual student's progress or conduct. The link lecturer will be the first person to contact if there are any serious concerns about a student's performance.
- The academic should be available to provide any such advice outside and in addition to their normal visits to the placement;

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- The academic **provides students** with academic support aimed at helping them to achieve the curriculum requirements of their practice experience (this might include: their learning outcomes for the placement; integration of their theoretical knowledge with their practice experiences and vice versa and so on). Academics may provide this support through individual tutorials, seminar sessions etc.;
- The academic **provides educational leadership to practice placement staff** in developing their Welcome letter and induction programme for new students to the placement; in developing the placement educational programme for students, developing learning activities and in publicising these opportunities;
- The academic **provides educational support to practice placement mentors** in all matters relating to students' professional development such as: assessment of progress, ensuring a consistent approach to assessment; and supporting mentors in keeping their knowledge of students' needs up to date.
- The academic *shares* responsibility for **Ongoing Quality Monitoring and Enhancement** (OQME) with the nominated representatives of their link placement area/s. This responsibility includes: ensuring the 2 yearly Placement profile and OQME review is up-to-date; undertaking the 6 monthly review of action plans and student/mentor evaluations and returning completed documents promptly to the Systems Manager for Practice Education
- The academic is expected to participate in relevant **meetings** of the Educational Trust Team/Community of Practice team and to work collaboratively with other academic and placement colleagues in promoting the best interests of students and the School.

**N.B.** Academics do not have a responsibility to provide direct patient care unless this has been negotiated as part of their role and is documented in their job description. Such clinical activities will otherwise constitute an additional aspect of their link lecturer role within the School as a whole.