Guide for Practice Teachers
Specialist Community Public Health Nursing Programme

Preparation, Continuing Professional Development & Support

2014 - 2015
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1. **Introduction & Background**

Welcome to the University. This guide is intended for practice teachers and all those involved in the management, supervision and support of practice teachers in practice placements. The templates provided in the appendices are intended to support the development of evidence for portfolios for the triennial review process.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with:


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The NMC requires that all Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (SPCHN) students must be allocated a practice teacher (PT).

In August 2006 the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) published Standards to support learning and assessment in practice (NMC 2006). These were subsequently revised and the second edition published in July 2008. The NMC has circulated additional advice in relation to ‘applying due regard’.

These standards provide a single developmental framework which defines and describes the knowledge and skills for nurses and midwives to apply in practice when supporting and assessing students undertaking NMC approved programmes leading to registration or a recordable qualification.

2. **Preparation of Practice Teachers**

Development into the sign-off practice teacher role is a process that normally takes two years. See the flow chart on page 4. The nature of the preceptorship period is for placement providers to decide and the placement provider will decide if the PT is ready to be annotated on the local register as a sign-off PT; however this would normally be a year. Whilst the standards stipulate that PT’s should only support one SCPHN health visitor student at any point in time, flexibility has subsequently been applied (NMC, 2011). The slides produced by Rita Newland available on the NMC website provide exemplars of alternatives that may be considered and applied.

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1 NMC Circular 26/2007: ‘Applying due regard to learning and assessment in practice’
2 NMC Circular 08/2011: ‘Practice teachers supporting more than one student (health visitor) in practice’
The University of Bolton values its relationship with all partners in practice and will continue to work actively to support practice placement providers to ensure that flexibility is applied in order to address workforce development requirements. At the same time the NMC has made it clear in their communications and documentation that Higher Education Institutes (HEI’s) are ultimately responsible for the quality of student support. Therefore in all cases reassurances will be sought that students are being provided with adequate support and supervision to enable them to successfully complete the programme. See appendix 9 for detail of expected supervision processes in practice.

3. Practice Placement Provider Responsibilities:

- Maintaining an up-to-date local register of current mentors and practice teachers including regularly reviewing the local register and adding or removing names of nurses and midwives as necessary’ (NMC, 2008, p.11)
- Working with the HEI to ensure that each SCPHN student has a named sign-off PT
- Ensuring a support system is in place for trainee PT’s, PT’s who have not achieved sign-off, mentors and experienced practitioners who are supporting SCPHN students (for example facilitating peer support groups, clinical supervision)
- Managing the triennial review process

(NMC, 2008)

4. University Responsibilities in Supporting Practice Teachers:

The university facilitates a range of learning and support opportunities for practice teachers in the form of the following:

- A range of CPD provision
- Electronic resources
- Workshops
- Newsletters
- Links with lecturers on the academic programme that includes practice visits
- Additional support for dealing with challenging situations
5. Practice Teacher Preparation and CPD: Flow Chart

Table 4. Flow chart demonstrating process of PT preparation and CPD

6. Responsibilities of Practice Teachers:

According to the NMC (2008, p.22), and in relation to the SCPHN programme at Bolton, practice teachers are responsible and accountable for:

- Organising and co-ordinating learning activities in both academic and practice environments for pre-registration students, and those intending to register as a specialist community public health nurse (SCPHN) and specialist practice qualifications where this is a local requirement.
- Complete and maintain as a live document an annual practice placement audit ensuring changes are recorded and acted upon as necessary
- Supervising students and providing them with constructive feedback on their achievements
- Setting and monitoring achievement of realistic learning objectives in practice
- Assessing total performance – including skills, attitudes and behaviours ensuring that the appropriate sections in the student’s ‘Portfolio of University & Practice Based Learning’ are completed and signed.
- Providing evidence as required by programme providers of the student’s achievement or lack of achievement
7. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Practice Teachers.

The NMC requires all practice teachers to maintain and develop their knowledge, skills and competence in order to be maintained on the local register (see page NMC Standards (2008, p.12).

For those wishing to assume the role of practice teacher for students undertaking the specialist community public health nursing programmes and demonstrate ‘sign-off’ for students’ capability for safe and effective practice for entry to the register as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse the following applies (see also appendix 7 ‘Process for Triennial Review’):

- Each practice teacher will provide evidence of how they continue to meet all eight of the Practice Teacher Standards over a three year period (in preparation for the triennial review)
- The trust educational lead(or equivalent) of the prospective practice teacher must sign to verify the evidence and that the practitioner may be included on the local register as a ‘Practice Teacher’
- All practice teachers must provide evidence at attendance of annual updates for the students’ programme of learning. Some face-to-face activity must take place as indicated in the bullet point below
- Practitioners should have the opportunity to discuss issues relating to supervision, assessment of competence and fitness for safe and effective practice
- Evidence must be included for their professional profile and made available if required during an NMC visit to the practice placement
- A mechanism for sharing the verification documentation with the University must be in place as evidence of the practitioners’ capability to assume the practice teacher role for their students
- There will be triennial review of the status of the practice teachers as per the standards, for which the form provided in Appendix A must be completed to demonstrate ongoing competence
- Practice teachers must demonstrate they meet the additional criteria for ‘sign-off’ mentors (NMC, 2008, pp. 21-22). Sign-off status must be annotated on the register only when sign-off criteria are met in full.

8. Dealing with Problematic Situations

Problematic and challenging situations involving SCPHN students will be dealt with through the protocol for that particular programme and practice teacher must refer to this in those cases. For University of Bolton SCPHN students this can be found in section 7.2 under ‘Protocol for Raising Matters of Concern in Community Practice’ of the Student’s Programme Handbook.

Where difficulties are experienced during the support and supervision of trainee practice teachers in relation to their educational role, or where trainee practice teachers themselves are identifying problems whilst on the Practice Teacher course this is both a practice and a university concern. Most situations can be resolved through liaison and a discussion. A
A tripartite meeting between the trainee PT, the mentor/supervisor and the tutor is suggested. Mentors and supervisors are urged to speak to the programme tutor to clarify or resolve situations in an attempt to prevent escalation. Link tutors from the university on their practice visits are well placed to support practitioners faced with challenging situations in relation to supporting students. Problematic situations that cannot be resolved through these routes may need to be referred to the line manager and where it is felt the situation may impact on the SCPHN student the Programme Leader for that programme must be informed.

Where difficulties arise regarding a practitioner’s actual clinical and professional practice these must be discussed with the relevant line manager. All University of Bolton students are subject to the University Fitness to Practice policy and procedures:

http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Students/PoliciesProceduresRegulations/AllStudents/Documents/FitnessToPracticeProcedureJuly2011.pdf

Remember tutors at the University are here to help and will be happy to support the development of solutions that lead to positive outcomes for all our students/course members.

Also the following process should be referred to when dealing with incidents involving students in the practice placement:

9. Standards Framework - The Domains

There are eight domains in the standards framework. Within these, outcomes have been identified for mentors, practice teachers and teachers so that there is clear accountability for making decisions that lead to entry to the register. The eight domains are:

1. Establishing effective working relationships
2. Facilitation of learning
3. Assessment and accountability
4. Evaluation of learning
5. Creating an environment for learning
6. Context of practice
7. Evidence-based practice
8. Leadership

Producing the Evidence

Practitioners will themselves decide how best to gather and present their evidence. It is important to note however that practice teachers need to demonstrate currency in both their clinical and their educational role. The evidence can then be reflected upon, discussed and reviewed with the appropriate line manager and then a summary of this evidence and verification of its existence provided in the attached documentation. The attached documentation takes each of the 8 standards in turn, stating what the practitioner must demonstrate, and provides examples of evidence. These are of course examples and there may be other forms of evidence that are considered more appropriate.
Appendix 1: Providing evidence against the standards - templates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARD 1: Establishing effective working relationships</th>
<th>List the specific activities you have undertaken and the evidence which you have collected in relation to this standard(s).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Have effective professional and interprofessional working relationships to support learning for entry to the register and education at a level above initial registration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be able to support students moving into specific areas of practice or a level of practice beyond initial registration identifying their individual needs in moving to a different level of practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support mentors and other professionals in their roles to support learning across practice and academic learning environments</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of evidence may include:

- Timetables and/or induction plans and processes for learners
- Evidence of working with other professionals (notes and minutes of meetings) for the purpose of developing and supporting learning in practice (liaising/initiating or attending meetings re education in practice/organising multi-professional learning experiences and/or interprofessional learning opportunities)
- Clinical supervision documentation; tutorial support and appraisal records; preceptorship documentation
- Supporting others in the team in terms of continuing professional development, including supervising trainee practice teachers and Mentors) and initiating and facilitating support systems such as clinical supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARD 2: Facilitation of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
- Enable students to relate theory to practice whilst developing critically reflective skills
- Foster professional growth and personal development by use of effective communication and facilitation skills
- Facilitate and develop the ethos of interprofessional learning and working

**Examples of evidence may include:**
- A practice schedule/curriculum/timetable/induction plan
- Teaching plans and learner resources
- Anonymised examples of learning contracts and timetables demonstrating how the practice teacher encouraged the learner to manage their own learning.
- Critical reflection/notes from clinical supervision
- Examples of arrangements for alternative practice

**STANDARD 3: Assessment and accountability**

- Set effective professional boundaries whilst creating a dynamic, constructive teacher-learner relationship
- In partnership with other members of the teaching team use knowledge and experience to design and implement assessment frameworks
- Be able to assess practice for registration and also at a level beyond that of initial registration
- Provide constructive feedback to learners and assist them in identifying future learning needs and actions, managing failing students so that they may either 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
- Be accountable for confirming that students have met or not met NMC standards of proficiency in practice for registration at a level beyond initial registration and are capable of safe and effective practice

List the specific activities you have undertaken and the evidence which you have collected in relation to this standard(s).
Examples of evidence may include of:

- Anonymous formative and summative assessment documentation
- Testimonials from others (colleagues and student) and evidence of meetings working with and supporting others in making assessment decisions
- Completed anonymous assessment tools (i.e. communication skills checklist)
- Reflective account of dealing with a challenging situation or decision making in relation to assessment
- Record of observation of the learner in practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARD 4: Evaluation of Learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design evaluation strategies to determine the effectiveness of practice and academic experience accessed by students at both registration level and those in education at a level beyond initial registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborate with other members of the teaching team to judge and develop learning, assessment and support appropriate to practice and levels of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect evidence on the quality of education in practice, and determine how well NMC requirements for standards of proficiency are being achieved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List the specific activities you have undertaken and the evidence which you have collected in relation to this standard(s).

Examples of evidence may include:

- Evaluations and feedback from learners
- SWOT analysis
- Reflections on teaching and learning
- Audit documentation
- Feedback from other stakeholders
- Participating in local audit and quality assurance processes
### STANDARD 5: Creating an environment for learning

- Enable learners to access opportunities to learn and work within interprofessional teams
- Initiate the creation of optimum learning environments for students at registration level and for those in education at a level beyond initial registration
- Work closely with others involved in education, in practice and academic settings, to adapt to change and inform curriculum development

**Examples of evidence may include:**
- Development of workbook and learning resources
- Practice development meetings in which knowledge and experience is shared
- Audit documents
- Interprofessional learning sessions
- Plans for alternative experiences
- Minutes of staff meetings demonstrating reference to developing the learning environment

**List the specific activities you have undertaken and the evidence which you have collected in relation to this standard(s).**

### STANDARD 6: Context of practice

- Recognise the unique needs of practice and contribute to development of an environment that supports achievement of NMC standards of proficiency
- Set and maintain professional boundaries, whilst at the same time recognising the contribution of the wider interprofessional team and the context of care delivery
- Support learners in exploring new ways of working and the impact this may have on established professional roles

**List the specific activities you have undertaken and the evidence which you have collected in relation to this standard(s).**
### Examples of evidence may include:
- SWOT analysis
- Plans for facilitating access to a variety of learning experiences and professional role models (alternative experiences/public health)
- Reflections/student feedback/testimonials on role modelling professional practice in a multi-professional setting
- Utilising strategies for linking theory/policy and practice such as reflective practice sessions, development of learning contracts
- Clinical supervision

### STANDARD 7: Evidence based practice

- Identify areas for research and practice development based on interpretation of existing evidence
- Use local and national health frameworks to review and identify developmental needs
- Advance their own knowledge and practice in order to develop new practitioners, at both registration levels and education at a level beyond initial registration, to be able to meet changes in practice roles and care delivery
- Disseminate findings from research and practice development to enhance practice and the quality of learning experiences

List the specific activities you have undertaken and the evidence which you have collected in relation to this standard(s).

### Examples of evidence may include:
- Research articles, current policy documents etc shared with others
- Practice development meeting demonstrating current evidence and promoting change
- Attendance at appropriate workshops; study days and in-service training
- Implementation of new evidence-based approaches in practice
- Reflective practice
### STANDARD 8: Leadership

- Provide practice leadership and expertise in application of knowledge and skills based on evidence
- Demonstrate the ability to lead education in practice, working across practice and academic settings
- Manage competing demands of practice and education related to supporting different practice levels of students
- Lead and contribute to evaluation of the effectiveness of learning and assessment in practice

List the specific activities you have undertaken and the evidence which you have collected in relation to this standard(s).

### Examples of evidence may include:

- Reflection/testimonies/minutes of meetings demonstrating implementing change and supporting learners and others in the team to make changes
- Liaising regularly, and attending meetings, with staff and educators in both practice and the educational establishment (emails, minutes)
- Reflections on management of challenging situations within the team/learning environment
- Contribution to revision of policy documents
- Leading staff development/training activities
Appendix 2: Record of Student Learners

In order to meet triennial review requirements you must have supervised a minimum of one SCPHN student within the 3 year period.

Use this sheet to record some of the details of students you have supervised. You may also wish to record pre-registration students supported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Education Institution</th>
<th>Year Student Commenced</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Sign-Off Date</th>
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Appendix 3: Annual Updates

In order to meet triennial review requirements, you are expected to participate in annual updating of your practice teacher role. The purpose of annual updating is to ensure that you have current knowledge of NMC approved programmes and current Department of Health Policy, are able to discuss the implications of changes to NMC requirements and have the opportunity to discuss issues relating to supervision, assessment of competence and fitness for safe and effective practice.

The annual update can be flexible according to local circumstances and the NMC suggest annual updates can be ongoing throughout the year, rather than consisting of a single annual event. They can incorporate face-to-face meetings which may consist of small, informal group discussions in the practice environment or more structured meetings led by programme providers. The meetings can be supported by other resources and activities such as news letters, on-line resources, reflective practice, reading, reviewing literature etc.

Evidence to support annual updating activity might include:

- Attendance at local and university run practice teacher update sessions/workshops
- Information sessions from education facilitators and academic staff related to student programmes and documentation
- Conferences or seminars related to teaching and learning, learning and development and practice based education
- Participation in local practice teacher support forums or education groups
- Face-to-face discussion with education facilitators / academic staff on any aspect of supporting learners
- Reflective accounts of practice teaching experiences, e.g. dealing with challenging students or assisting students to achieve a particular competence
- Anonymised examples of student assessments and action plans that you have contributed to
- Development of learning and teaching resources such as student induction packs / information booklets
- Reflective accounts on annual updating activity

Dates of attendance at update sessions and face-to-face contact / discussion with academic staff will be recorded on the University of Bolton practice teacher register. This and other updating activity can be recorded in the table below.
**Appendix 4: Annual Updating Activity template**

Use this table to record your annual updating activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Brief Description of Activity</th>
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Additional copies of this page can be obtained from the programme leader.
Appendix 5: Process for Triennial Review

Practice Teacher’s are accountable and responsible for evidencing their own updating activities and collating and documenting their ongoing learning and development in terms of the NMC standards for practice teaching. *This triennial review document will help you in this process and should be submitted along with supporting evidence to determine whether you have met the NMC triennial review criteria.*

The University of Bolton require that you attend at least one update has not been met within a twelve month period.

On a three yearly basis (your triennial review) the placement register holder must map your competencies and progress against the NMC Practice Teacher Standards. If the triennial review requirements have been met, then the practice teacher will remain on the practice teacher register.

If the requirements have not been met then it is likely that the practice teacher will temporarily be removed from the practice teacher register.
Appendix 6: Triennial Review Record

Name:.................................................................................................................................
Practice Learning Environment:............................................................................................
Date of Triennial Review:.........................................................................................................

To be maintained on the local register the practice teacher must have evidence of having:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Achieved (Triennial Review Signatory)</th>
<th>Not Achieved (Triennial Review Signatory)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervised at least one student with due regard (extenuating circumstances permitting) within the three year period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participated in annual updating - to include an opportunity to meet and explore assessment and supervision issues with other practice teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explored as a group activity the validity and reliability of judgments made when assessing practice in challenging circumstances.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapped ongoing development in their role against the current NMC practice teacher standards</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been deemed to have met all requirements needed to be maintained on the local register as a practice teacher</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The practice teacher has met the requirements to be maintained on the local register?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If the criteria are met the next review date will be in three years. A date for review will be agreed.

Signature of Database holder:............................................................................................

Signature of Practice Teacher:............................................................................................

Signature of Manager:...........................................................................................................

Next Review Date: .............................................................................................................

A copy of this form should be retained for staff records.
Appendix 7: University of Bolton SCPHN programme – notes on practice supervision

Below provides detail on the expectations of the SCPHN programme at the University of Bolton in terms of the support and supervision of its students. Guidance is taken from recent advice and guidance from the NMC. See diagrammatic overview page 14

Students must have a named practice teacher and practice teachers should support only one SCPHN student at any point in time. In those areas and those occasions when there are limited numbers of practice teachers and high numbers of students the following points need to be considered.

When supervising experienced practitioners, mentors and trainee practice teachers, the practice teacher must (see definition of roles on the following page):

- Have clinical currency and capability in the field in which the SCPHN student is being assessed
- Have in place an explicit process for meetings for reflection and assessment of practice
- Be available to the student and the student’s supervisor for advice and support throughout the programme
- Attend meetings with the link lecturer, student and the student’s supervisor on at least three occasions during the one year programme (normally at least once per term)
- It would not be expected that the practice teacher supervise more than three supervisor/student relationships at any one time due to the impact on the practice teachers’ own workload – see notes below

Additionally
Supporting experienced practitioners and mentors:
- The practice teacher must meet with the experienced practitioner at predetermined points – experienced practitioners will normally need weekly support and supervision
- The practice teacher must also spend time working alongside supervising the student in practice as part of the overall assessment process in order to make accountable decisions (normally once every 2-4 weeks)

Supporting trainee practice teachers:
- The practice teacher must also spend time working alongside supervising the student in practice as part of the overall assessment process in order to make accountable decisions (normally once every 2-4 weeks)
- The practice teacher must meet with the trainee practice teachers for support and supervision, normally once every 2-4 weeks

Supporting practice teachers without sign-off status:
- The practice teacher without sign-off status will normally require support once per term and will require continued support and supervision in terms of decision making when signing off the students’ fitness to practice.
- Those who have not achieved sign-off should normally only support one student at a time

The University of Bolton acknowledges that were a practice teacher is overseeing more than one students’ placement (therefore supporting and supervising the supervisors as well as the students) this will have considerable impact on their time. This time commitment needs to be articulated and continually reviewed to ensure safe practice for all. We strongly advise that a record be kept of all activities related to this supervision process.
Practice Teachers Preparation, Continuing Professional Development & Support: Definition of Terms

For the purpose of clarity the University of Bolton has defined the roles referred to above as follows:

Practice Teacher (SCPHN):

A Nurse/SCPHN who has gained knowledge, skills and competence in their specialist field of practice and in their teaching role. The practice teacher must have met the outcomes of stage 3 in the NMC standards to support learning and assessment in practice. They will have also met the additional criteria for 'sign-off' practice teacher and be current on the local register, therefore having signed off a SCPHN/SCHCN at least within the last three years.

Experienced Practitioner:

A Nurse/SCPHN who has gained knowledge, skills and competence in their specialist field of practice. It is expected that an 'experienced practitioner' would have been exposed to the depth and breadth of that practice, have been involved in supporting other team members and have undertaken some leadership responsibilities. Therefore an 'experienced practitioner' would not normally have been qualified in that field for less than two years.

Mentor:

As above but also has a recent (last 5 years) mentor qualification and within that time frame has mentored two or more pre-registration students. The mentor would be expected to have been in the related specialist field of practice (for example SCPHN/SCHCN) for no less than two years. It is expected though that most 'experienced practitioners' will also be mentors.

Trainee (student) Practice Teacher

A trainee or student practice teacher is a nurse/SCPHN who has gained knowledge, skills and competence in their specialist field of practice and is undertaking a PT preparation programme in order to develop their teaching role to demonstrate achievement of the outcomes of stage 3 in the NMC standards to support learning and assessment in practice. It is expected they will be ‘novices’ in supporting SCPHN students.

Practice Teacher (without sign-off)

As above, but has successfully completed an approved programme and is undertaking a period of preceptorship in which they will be supervised in order to demonstrate the additional criteria for 'sign-off' practice teacher.
Sign-off PT’s should not normally support more than three student/mentor/trainee PT partnerships at any time. Exceptions may be where students are studying on a part time basis.