

School of Health Sciences

Division of Occupational Therapy and Arts Therapies

Practice Based Learning Handbook

Master of Occupational Therapy

BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy

MSc in Occupational Therapy (pre-reg)

2024 - 2025

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# Glossary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Practice-based learning** | The setting in which a learner is educated for a stipulated period of time, and where professional competence is assessed. |
| **Professional Practice Tutor** | The academic member of staff based at the higher education institution, who coordinates the practice education elements of the programme. This includes the development of new Practice-based Learning areas, and the education of practice educators. |
| **Personal Academic Tutor** | An academic member of staff who acts as a contact person for a group of learners, and practice educators throughout Practice-based Learning. |
| **Practice Education Co-ordinator** | The Practice Education Co-ordinator role normally includes the co-ordination of Practice-based Learning across a specific site/sector, liaising with the higher education institution and acting in an advisory capacity to practice educators and learners as required during practice experiences. |
| **Practice Educator** | This refers to the person facilitating learners’ education whilst they are on Practice-based Learning. The practice educator is an occupational therapist who normally has completed a practice educators’ course and is familiar with the University. The practice educator is responsible for the assessed outcome on Practice-based Learning. |

# 1. Introduction

Welcome to the Queen Margaret University Occupational Therapy Practice-based Learning Handbook.

This handbook provides an overview of the Master of Occupational Therapy, BSc (Hons) and MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-reg), programmes and the processes involved in practice-based learning provision. The handbook is intended for occupational therapy learners, practice educators, and organisations hosting practice-based learning. Information in the handbook includes:

* Timing of practice-based learning for the programme
* Learning outcomes for each practice-based learning module
* Details of the practice-based learning assessment process
* Practice-based learning procedures and guidelines

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

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

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

**Joanna Beveridge & Julie King**

**Professional Practice Tutors**

**Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh**

# 2. Practice-based learning pattern

The pre–registration programmes aim to offer suitably qualified graduate applicants the opportunity to register as an occupational therapist with the Health and Care Professions Council in either two or four years.

The World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT 2016) requires evidence of 1000 hours of successfully completed practice-based learning hours prior to qualification. Through the completion of four practice-based learning modules learners will undertake a minimum of 1162.5 hours in practice. The delivery pattern for practice-based learning for the two routes is depicted in the tables below.

Table 1: Practice Practice-based Learning delivery pattern for MSc (pre-reg) in Occupational Therapy (accelerated route)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year of Programme** | **Practice-based Learning** | **Semester** | **Duration** | **Practice-based Learning Days** | **Hours** | **SCQF Level** |
| Year 1 | Practice-based Learning 1 | Semester 2 | 6 weeks full time | 30 days | 225 | 7 |
| Year 1 | Practice-based Learning 2 | Semester 2 | 6 weeks full time | 30 days | 225 | 8 |
| Year 2 | Practice-based Learning 3 | Semester 1 | 9 weeks full time | 45 days | 337.5 | 9 |
| Year 2 | Practice-based Learning 4 | Semester 2 | 10 weeks full time | 50 days | 375 | 10 |

Table 2: Practice Practice-based Learning delivery pattern for BSc (Hons) and Master of Occupational Therapy (4-year routes)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year of Programme** | **Practice-based Learning** | **Semester** | **Duration** | **Practice-based Learning Days** | **ours** | **SCQF Level** |
| Year 1 | Practice-based Learning 1 | Semester 2 | 6 weeks full time | 30 days | 225 | 7 |
| Year 2 | Practice Practice Learning 2 | Semester 2 | 6 weeks full time | 30 days | 225 | 8 |
| Year 3 | Practice-based Learning 3 | Semester 1 | 9 weeks full time | 45 days | 337.5 | 9 |
| Year 4 | Practice-based Learning 4 | Semester 2 | 10 weeks full time | 50 days | 375 | 10 |

## 2.1. Practice-based learning experience

Each practice-based learning module has a unique set of learning outcomes, devised by the University. These outcomes articulate with prior and future university studies and previous practice-based learning modules. Learning outcomes increase in complexity as the learner progresses through the programme and each practice-based learning experience provides building blocks for the future.

Practice-based Learning 1 (PBL1**)**

Practice-based Learning 1 offers learners the first opportunity of learning in a practice setting. They are acquiring knowledge and a repertoire of skills for functioning in practice. Learners observe, practice and reflect on their performance. They take an active role with service users, applying knowledge and developing professional reasoning skills.

The focus of Practice-based Learning 1 includes opportunities to:-

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

Practice-based Learning 2 (PBL2)

Practice-based Learning 2 encourages learners to draw upon and integrate knowledge from their university based studies and previous learning from PBL1. During this module learners actively contribute to the practice setting. Emphasis is on practice and experience of the occupational therapy process, problem solving and communication.

The focus of PBL2 includes opportunities to:-

* experience an area practice significantly different from that encountered in PBL1;
* participate in safe and effective service delivery;
* further develop appropriate professional skills, attitudes and values;
* actively participate in inter professional and multi-agency working;
* reflect on and evaluate personal performance;
* continue to evidence professional development.

Practice-based Learning 3 (PBL3)

The third practice-based learning module provides learners with the opportunity to broaden and consolidate their knowledge of practice. Learners gain a greater degree of autonomy, adopting a co-worker role with their practice educator and assume joint responsibility for active service provision.

This practice-based learning experience will enable learners to:-

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

Practice-based Learning 4 (PBL4)

During this final practice-based learning module learners will be expected to demonstrate a competent level of attainment in all aspects of practice and that they have the knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate for practice now and in the future.

This practice-based learning module will enable learners to:-

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

# 3. Responsibilities during practice-based learning

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of the various individuals involved in practice-based learning, namely the learner, practice educator, personal academic tutor, Practice education Coordinator, Professional Practice Tutor, pre-placement support officer, and placement administrator

## 3.1. Learner responsibilities

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

Prior to practice-based learning it is expected that the learner will:

* Have adequate funding arrangements in place to support attendance at practice-based learning.
* Monitor their Learner e-mail accounts and respond promptly to any enquiries from their School/Division.
* Attend all practice-based learning briefings and/or participate in all mandatory preparatory activities as required by the School/Division.
* Complete an OT Learner Advance Information for Practice Educators Form and forward this to the Practice Education Co-ordinator, normally within six weeks of the start date of practice-based learning.
* Read all documentation provided by the University for practice-based learning including assessment requirements, procedures, and regulations.
* Read all information provided or recommended by host organisations.
* Revise relevant taught information, and skills in preparation for practice-based learning.

At the start of the practice-based learning and throughout practice-based learning, learners must:

* Observe the Health and Care Professions Council Guidance on Conduct, and Ethics for Students (HCPC 2016), and Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics (RCOT 2021) at all times.
* Be punctual at all times, and dressed appropriately for the practice-based learning setting and the work involved.
* Reflect the status of a team member and respectfully engage with other members of staff at the setting as appropriate.
* Discuss, and develop a negotiated Learning Agreement with the practice educator.
* Plan a programme of experience with the practice educator which takes into account opportunities offered by the setting.
* Contact their Personal Academic Tutor at the earliest opportunity if any significant matters arise during the practice-based learning, including any areas of concern relating to their own welfare and personal safety, or well-being.
* Respond to email communication at the midway point of their practice-based learning when PAT initiates contact.
* Report any health and safety concerns that have not been addressed by the practice-based learning provider to the University, including safety or well-being of service users, or carers.
* Contact the University if circumstances related to their practice-based learning changes such as site, and/or duties, and/or practice educator.
* Abide by the rules and regulations regarding health and safety and other working practices and procedures of the practice-based learning provider.
* At all times, follow the procedures of the practice-based learning setting, and Queen Margaret University regarding absence and sickness.
* Be fully prepared for supervision sessions and contribute to the supervision process in a critically reflective and professional manner.
* Contribute towards and actively participate in the midway review, and final evaluation of their performance displaying openness to, respect and acknowledgement of other people’s ideas
* Reflect on the practice-based learning experience enabling personal and professional development. Complete selected items of evidence to add to their Continuing Professional Development Portfolio and review these with practice educators where relevant.

At the end of the Practice-based Learning, learners must:

* Complete the Learner Evaluation of practice-based learning Form and share this with practice educators, ensuring the practice educator has time to discuss any points as necessary.
* Upload fully signed and dated copies of the Practice-based Learning Assessment Form and Learner Evaluation of Practice-based Learning Form to the drop boxes on Canvas within 5 working days of the end of the experience.
* Complete the practice-based learning Resumé Form and add this to their portfolio.

## 3.2. Practice Educator responsibilities.

Practice Educators (PE) play a key role in the professional development of occupational therapy learners. Practice educators are experienced occupational therapists who are responsible for the assessed outcome on practice-based learning.

Prior to the Practice-based Learning starting, the practice educator:

* Undertakes appropriate practice educator training.
* Reviews the occupational therapy sections of the University’s Practice-based Learning Support website for additional information and support https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/practice-based-learning/nursing-and-allied-health-programmes-pbl-information/
* Utilises information from the OT Learner Advance Information for Practice Educators Form to anticipate the varied learning requirements of learners, for example because of a declared disability or specific cultural background.
* Provides information for learners in advance of the start of the practice-based learning. This includes an overview of the service, clear directions and travel information, recommended reading, and any other information considered helpful.
* Prepares an induction for the learners first day.
* Formulates the outline of an appropriate learner diary/ plan to be added to and developed during practice-based learning.

At the start of the Practice-based Learning and throughout the practice educator:

* Meets and carries out an induction with the student, including:
  + A Learner identity check;
  + Review content of student’s Practice-based Learning Passport;
  + Location of appropriate literature such as policies, books etc;
  + Tour of facilities and location of lockers, library etc;
  + Emergency procedures and policies in the event of fire, cardiac arrest etc;
  + Contact details in the event of an emergency and reporting sickness absence.
* Ensures learner has practice educator’s contact number(s).
* Ensures learner always has a named member of the multidisciplinary team to refer to.
* Collaborates with the learner to develop a programme which reflects their learning needs as identified in the negotiated learning agreement and identify learning opportunities in the practice setting.
* Plans a programme of experience which takes into account practice-based learning opportunities, and the above.
* Schedules formal supervision with the learner. This must be documented in supervision notes and stored appropriately.
* Plans dates and times for the midway and final reports with the learner, ensuring these are given to the learner at the appropriate time. Inform the University Professional Practice Tutor if the learner is achieving the equivalent of an A/A\* standard performance at either the midway, or final evaluation.

• Respond to email communication at the midway point of their practice-based

learning when PAT initiates contact.

* Monitors the learner’s attendance throughout the practice-based learning. Signs off on a weekly basis timecards verifying number of hours completed by the learner.
* Informs the University immediately if the learner has an authorised or unexpected absence from Practice-based learning which lasts for more than 48 hours.
* Inform the learner’s Personal Academic Tutor as soon as possible if any concerns arise regarding the learner’s well-being, behaviour and/or quality of performance over all.
* Uses feedback in the Learner Evaluation of Practice-based Learning Form as an integral part of a constructive evaluation process.

## 3.3. Personal Academic Tutor responsibilities

Key responsibilities

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

## 3.4. Practice Education Co-ordinator responsibilities

The Practice Education Coordinator plays an essential role in fostering a culture whereby practice-based learning is seen as a positive activity contributing towards staff continuing professional development and recruitment within the service.

Practice Education Co-ordinators’ responsibilities include:

* Collaborating with the University to identify new practice-based learning opportunities alongside new service delivery developments.
* Coordinating the returns for university requests for practice-based learning offers within the timescale identified.
* Bringing to the attention of the University as soon as possible potential difficulties arising which may result in the cancellation of a practice-based learning experience.
* Coordinating responses to learners’ Advance Notification for Practice Educators Form.
* Ensuring staff acting in their capacity as practice educators have adequate training, and demonstrate ongoing commitment to their professional role.
* Offering support to practice educators as required.
* Bringing to the attention of the University any issues creating difficulty on practice-based learning which may not be reported by the practice educator, or student.
* Taking cognisance of comments made in each Learner Evaluation of Practice-based Learning Form using these as an integral part of a constructive evaluation process.
* Attending and participating in meetings, workshops and other events associated with practice-based learning.

## 3.5 Professional Practice Tutor responsibilities

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

Practice-based Learning governance and development

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

Practice educator preparation

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

Learner preparation

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

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

* Planning and implementing a range of mechanisms for the distribution and cascading of information and documentation to host organisations, practice-based learning co-ordinators, Practice Educators, Personal Academic Tutors, and learners.
* Bringing to the attention of the Programme Leader any concerns arising about a student’s well-being, behaviour, or performance during a practice -based learning.

Quality assurance

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

## 3.6 Placement administrator responsibilities

* Forwarding practice-based learning offers request forms to the occupational therapy practice-based learning co-ordinators network on an annual basis.
* Co-ordinates and collates all returned offers forms.
* Fielding queries about practice–based learning.
* Collating all practice-based learning assessment paperwork returned by learners to the University.
* Distributing relevant information throughout the year to the practice-based learning co-ordinators network.

## 3.7. Pre-placement support officer responsibilities

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

# 4. Organisation of practice-based learning

## 4.1. Allocation of practice-based learning

In January of each year, the Placement Administrator forwards practice-based learning request forms to the practice-based learning co-ordinators network requesting practice-based learning offers for the next academic year. These forms are forwarded electronically to the network and returned to the University in the same way by the end of April. Offers received are collated by practice-based learning block and entered onto the database by the administrator. If there is a shortfall of offers, the University will contact network members directly requesting additional practice-based learning offers.

Learners are not permitted to organise their own practice-based learning. There is a practice-based learning allocation process to follow where learners complete a practice-based learning planning form and upload this to an electronic drop box in Canvas. Although individual learner needs are taken into consideration, this does not mean that all needs/ requests can be accommodated. Practice-based learning availability is dynamic and complex, moreover services are changing dramatically, and as such it is impossible to predict the exact provision of practice-based learning offers that will be available throughout the programme. Learners can only be allocated to practice-based learning offers that exist.

The allocation of practice-based learning offers is normally completed 12 weeks before the start date of each practice-based learning block and posted on Canvas. The practice-based learning co-ordinators network is notified by e-mail when allocations have been completed for each practice-based learning module.

All practice-based learning experiences are allocated to learners by the Professional Practice Tutor with due regard to the practice-based learning Allocation Process.

Guiding principles

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

Learners would not be placed in a service where a conflict of interest in relation to assessment of their performance is identified. The responsibility is with the learner to bring their circumstances to the attention of the Professional Practice Tutor prior to the allocation of practice-based learning.

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

## 4.2. Allocation of practice-based learning to learners with religious and/or cultural observances

A learner’s identity, such as their religious/ cultural practices can have a significant impact on teaching, learning and assessment in practice. However, it is a statutory requirement that the University and practice-based learning providers address these through establishing relevant policies and guidance which address diversity and inclusion (Great Britain Parliament 2010).

These policies include a commitment to:-

* promoting equal opportunity and diversity during employment;
* ensuring all employees are treated fairly and valued equally;
* valuing religious and cultural needs and practices, and meeting these where possible.

Learners may have particular religious or cultural needs in terms of requests which may appear to “conflict” with existing working requirements in the practice setting. Such issues may include:-

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

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

Guiding principles

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

## 4.3. Allocation of practice-based learning to disabled learners

Queen Margaret University is committed to equality of opportunity and believes in a culture of equality and diversity (QMU 2022). Disabled learners should experience the same broad range of practice settings as non–disabled learners to enable them to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes for each practice-based learning module. In this respect a physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments, mental illness or mental health issues, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy.

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

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

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

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

## 4.4. Practice-based Learning locations

Practice-based learning is located throughout mainland Scotland, and also some of the island areas. Learners complete practice-based learning in services where practice-based learning agreements have been established and formalised between the University and practice-based learning providers.

Due to the wide geographical dispersal of practice-based learning, it is expected that every learner will complete practice-based learning involving significant daily travel to, and from the site (normally, up to 1½ hours travel time each way), and/or moving into temporary accommodation.

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

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

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

There may be opportunities for learners to undertake practice-based learning in other countries with partners whom the Division has developed Exchange Agreements. This opportunity is subject to a robust selection process involving the Professional Practice Tutor, Programme Leader and where appropriate, Exchange Co-ordinator.

## 4.5. Practice-based learning experiences

Each practice-based learning experience encompasses working with people who are experiencing different occupational issues. Experiences normally include working with:-

* Statutory, independent, private and third sector settings
* Urban and rural, local or international settings
* Settings where there is no occupational therapy provision
* Non-frontline settings e.g. strategic and leadership roles, research
* People of different ages across the life course;
* Individuals, or groups, and communities from different socio-economic, and cultural perspectives;
* People who have recently acquired, and/or long standing occupational needs;
* People living with health conditions affecting different aspects of physical, and psychosocial functioning;
* Marginalised individuals, or groups and communities (e.g., people seeking asylum, homeless individuals).

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

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

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

## 4.6. Change to practice-based learning after allocation

Practice-based learning allocations are non-negotiable. A change of practice-based learning allocation is not a commonly occurring event and is avoided. Learners are not permitted to exchange allocated practice-based learning with their peers. Normally, the programme teams do not enter into third party communications about allocated practice-based learning. The responsibility lies with the learner to raise reasonable and relevant concerns directly with the Professional Practice Tutor.

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

Financial hardship is notconsidered a valid reason to request a change to practice-based learning. Learners should consider the cost of practice-based learning as being a necessary and integral part of the programme and plan for this in advance.

Learners may only request a change in practice-based learning allocation for extenuating circumstancesnot identified on the initial practice-based learning planning form, e.g., changes to health or well-being requiring reasonable adjustments, significant personal issues such as bereavement related to the type of practice-based learning. Relevant supporting evidence must be provided to the Professional Practice Tutor (e.g. medical certificate) before any such request can be considered. Evidence that is subsequently proven to be false is brought to the attention of the Programme Leader.

Requesting a change to a practice-based learning allocation does not guarantee that it can be made.

## 4.7. Practice-based learning travel and accommodation expenses

If the practice-based learning is away from the student’s home area and/or term time address and too far for daily travel, learners will need to move to temporary accommodation. There is no direct provision by Queen Margaret University for accommodation whilst on practice-based learning. Learners are expected to arrange their own temporary accommodation. There are some accommodation resources provided in the practice-based learning area in Canvas.

Learners may be eligible to claim back practice-based learning expenses either for additional accommodation or travel from the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS). Currently, there is no direct financial remuneration available to learners on the 2-year accelerated programme for the funding of travelling, or accommodation costs associated with practice-based learning.

* Learners who are in receipt of an award from SAAS may be able to claim back for Practice-based learning travel and accommodation costs from SAAS.Learners should retain all receipts and submit these to SAAS. Claims are subject to the travel element already included in the Standard Maintenance Allowance. Further information is available from the SAAS website: <http://www.saas.gov.uk/index.htm>
* International and self-funding learners are not eligible to claim for expenses from SAAS.

Information about the University Student Funding Service is available here: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/student-funding-service/>

## 4.8. Practice-based learning hours

In order to meet standards established and monitored by professional bodies, it should be noted that by the end of practice-based learning 4 every learner is required to have successfully completed a minimum of 1000 hours of assessed practice-based learning (RCOT, 2019; WFOT, 2016).

Learners are expected to work the same hours as their practice educators and these may vary between services, e.g. 8.30 am-4.30 pm, or 8.00 am-4.00 pm, or 9.00 am-5.00 pm. Some services operate over seven working days and therefore practice-based learning may involve evening, and weekend attendance. Learners should not assume they will be on practice-based learning Mondays–Fridays, daytime attendance only.

Absence of a written record of the appropriate number of hours may result in a learner having to complete extra practice-based learning hours prior to graduation. If difficulties arise with meeting practice-based learning hours, practice educators, and learners are actively encouraged draw this to the attention of the PPT so that a mutually acceptable plan of action can be developed.

Every learner has an individual practice-based learning profile logged by the practice-based learning administrator to denote accumulated hours and experiences across the course of their education. Each learner’s practice-based learning hours are verified by the PPT at the culmination of the programme to confirm eligibility for award.

## 4.9. Practice-based Learning study time

A requirement of the programmes is that each learner is allocated a half day of personal study per week (3.5 hours) at a time agreed with the practice educator. Study time is included in the overall practice-based learning hours.

## 4.10. Working relationship between learner and practice educators

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

Practice educators collaborate with learners to identify how the University learning outcomes for each practice-based learning module will be achieved and help the learner to determine a clear pathway for achieving these through the development of a Learning Agreement.

In addition to ongoing informal supervision from the practice educator, normally, learners receive a weekly formal supervision session If these sessions are not forthcoming from the practice educator, then the learner should request.

Practice educators assess learner’s performance on practice-based learning using the University grade descriptors for undergraduate programmes (QMU 2021). Practice educators are responsible for the assessed outcome.

## 4.11. Models of supervision during practice-based learning

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

Apprenticeship model (1:1)

One learner per practice educator. The practice educator structures the learner learning experiences and provides direct supervision and role-modelling to the learner throughout the course of their placement. The degree of supervision and the amount of responsibility given to the learner may vary, depending on the practice setting and the level of the learner.

Peer assisted learning model (2:1)

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

Team Model (1:2, 1:3, 1:4)

In this model, the education of a learner may be shared between two or more members of a team within a workplace. Combinations might include an experienced practice educator and a new practice educator; two practice educators from different organisations and the placement being structured around the patient journey for example, from tertiary care to social care. This model may be an attractive option for practitioners who work part-time, or if the practitioner’s caseload is coupled with management responsibilities.

Project focussed model

In project-focussed models learners work on projects or undertake a key role in developmental aspect of project work related to prevention, health promotion, supported self-management, or service development activities that could be applied at a group, or community level. The project focussed model can use alternate supervision models including face-face supervision, or long arm supervision from an occupational therapist. Learners may work in pairs during these placements to afford opportunities to realise the benefits of peer assisted learning.

Long arm supervision

Long-arm supervision is provided by an experienced practice educator who is not based at the same location as the learner(s). The long arm PE would have an established professional link with the organisation where the placement was based, or wish to forge one. An on-site mentor provides day to day support to the learner(s) and also input into supervision and assessment where appropriate. Learner(s) may be in the host organisation full time or part-time, and if this is the case then they will be with the long-arm PE in their service for the remainder of the week.

## 4.12. Learning agreement

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

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| **Important!**  **Learning Agreements are the keystone for individualised learning throughout each experience. The Subject Area respectfully requests that Practice-based Learning providers/ practice educators refrain from giving pre-determined weekly objectives to learners.** |

## 4.13. Reflective diary

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

## 4.14. Practice-based Learning portfolio

As part of their professional development learners compile a practice-based learning portfolio using a proforma developed by the programme team. The use of portfolios gives learners opportunities to evidence and reflect upon their learning. This process prepares learners for using portfolios to evidence their continuing professional development after completion of their studies (RCOT 2022; HCPC 2012c)

## 4.15. Complaints handing procedure

The University has implemented a Complaints Handling Procedure (QMU 2018) which can be found here:

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/complaint-handling/>

Complaints relating to practice-based learning, this should be discussed with the Programme Leader, Personal Academic Tutor or Professional Practice Tutor in the first instance.

# 5. Checking Learner Identity and attendance monitoring throughout practice-based Learning

QMU require a learners identity to be checked at the commencement of any practice-based learning module and attendance to be formally monitored.

## 5.1. Identity checking

Learner identity must be confirmed at the start of each practice-based learning. To do this learners are advised to take their QMU matriculation card to practice-based learning on the first day and show this to the practice educator(s). In the unlikely event that the student’s identity cannot be confirmed from their matriculation card, alternative official photo ID (i.e., passport, or driving licence) can be used to confirm identity. If the student’s identity cannot be confirmed the practice educator must contact the PPT as soon as possible.

Once the matriculation card has been checked and the student’s identity confirmed the practice educator should sign the declaration at the end of the practice-based learning assessment report form. The assessment form should be returned to the University in line with normal practice outlined in Section 17 of this handbook.

## 5.2. Attendance monitoring

Every learner is required to inform their practice-based learning site and the University should they be unable to attend on any given day. Learners should complete an absence form via the QMU student portal.

In the event that a learner has an authorised or unexpected absence from practice-based learning which lasts for more than 48 hours we ask that the practice educator informs Pamela Knox, Placement Administrator, School of Health Sciences of this absence immediately. E-mail: [otplacement@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:otplacement@qmu.ac.uk)

Attendance must be monitored throughout practice-based learning and all absences must be recorded by practice educator(s) in the appropriate sections of the timecards and Assessment Report Form.

## 5.3. Learner absences from Practice-based Learning

The University is aware that many learners undertake paid employment while studying. Employment outside of the programme must not adversely affect a learner’s work during practice-based learning. Learners are expected to mirror the working patterns of the site. Learners must recognise that flexibility on the part of the host organisation is notto be expected.

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

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| **Important!**  **Learners do not have the right to negotiate holidays, or other leaves of absence during practice-based learning directly with their Practice Educators.** |

Learners are expected to comply with the attendance and sickness absence policies of the host organisation and must familiarise themselves with these policies within the first week of practice-based learning.

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

Absences from practice-based learning for 5 working days or more must be supported by a medical certificate.

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| **Important!**  **Failure by learners to inform the practice educator,**  **and the University that they are not attending practice-based learning**  **will be regarded as unprofessional behaviour.** |

## 5.4. Learner withdrawal/ removal from practice-based learning

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

There may be occasions when Practice Educator(s) deem it appropriate to remove a learner from the area immediately, and they have the authority to do so. The practice-based learning site will report the matter at its earliest convenience to the University, the learner is also required to inform their Personal Academic Tutor immediately if any such event occurs.

# 6. Preparing learners for practice-based learning

Learners are enabled to prepare for practice-based learning in a variety of ways, including interactive workshops, group work, personal development planning, self-evaluation activities, directed reading, and e-learning. Key aspects of the preparation process are described in more detail below.

## 6.1. Canvas

All of the practice-based learning modules are supported by a designated practice-based learning area in the University’s virtual learning environment – Canvas. Through this medium learners are given clear time frames and deadlines for completion of preparatory tasks, and activities associated with practice-based learning.

## 6.2. Practice-based Learning Passport

The Practice-based Learning Passport is assessed on a pass/fail basis by the PPT to verify that every learner has completed all of the mandatory preparation tasks and training before being permitted to go on practice-based learning. Learners are taught via practical workshops, discussion groups, seminars, e-learning packages, and other independent study. Every learner is required to upload to their PE Passport workbook in EPortfolio documents, certificates, and records of having completed all of the required tasks/activities in preparation for progression to practice-based learning. It is the student’s responsibility to present the evidence in the Passport to the Practice Educator during the induction phase of practice-based learning.

## 6.3. Protection of Vulnerable Groups scheme

As learners will be doing regulated work with children and protected adults during practice-based learning, they must apply to register with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG). It is the responsibility of each learner to fill in the application form, provide the necessary documentation and to pay for this to be carried out prior to the first practice-based learning experience. The University checks and countersigns all PVG membership applications, and ensures that these have been received prior to commencing practice-based learning.

Further information on the PVG Scheme is available at: <https://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/disclosureinformation/pvgscheme.htm>

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| **Important!**    **Failure to have a Protection of Vulnerable Groups Certificate in place will result in the deferral of practice-based learning.** |

## 6.4. Health clearance checks

All new health care workers who have direct contact with patients must undergo a Standard Health Clearance Check before they take up post or in the case of learners in the School of Health Sciences before they are permitted to go on practice-based learning.

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

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| **Important!**  **Every learner must attend their initial Health Clearance Check appointment in order to progress to progress to practice-based learning** |

## 6.5. Professional indemnity insurance

Due to professional requirements learners are required to hold professional indemnity insurance as a pre-condition of progressing to practice-based learning. This is most easily gained through joining the professional body, and information on this is provided during the induction process into the programme. The University Pre-Placement Support Officer maintains a database to ensure that every learner has purchased Professional Indemnity Insurance. Evidence of this is also uploaded to the PBL passport by the learner.

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| **Important!**  **Failure to have an active Professional Indemnity Insurance policy in place will result in the deferral of a practice-based learning.** |

## 6.6. Insurance cover for motor vehicle use during practice-based learning

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

## 6.7. Insurance cover for overseas practice-based learning

Where a learner travels overseas on practice-based learning, the University has travel insurance in place. The learner should notify the Finance Office that they are going on practice-based learning, where they are going to and when and obtain an Insurance Policy Number and Emergency Contact Information.

## 6.8. Dress code/uniforms and name badges

The official National Health Service uniform is issued to all learners prior to their first practice-based learning. The Pre-Placement Support Officer co-ordinates the arrangements for the fitting for uniforms and provision of name badges. These processes are initiated during induction week.

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

Learners are referred to the NHS Scotland Dress Code (2010) <https://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/dl/DL(2018)04.pdf> and advised to dress professionally and for ease of movement wear comfortable clothing. In settings where name badges are worn, these must be visible at all times; some settings may also require an additional security pass.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 6.9. Promoting a safe working environment

Every learner must complete mandatory education and training upon a range of health and safety issues before the first practice-based learning begins, including:

* Public Protection (Child and Adult Protection)
* Basic life support
* De-escalation principles
* Information governance, and informed consent
* Manual handling
* Fire safety
* Selected elements of the Scottish Infection Control and Prevention Educational Pathway (SIPCEP)
* Equality and Diversity

## 6.10. Preparation for Practice-based Learning workshops

Interactive workshops held at the University enable learners to prepare for each PBL block. Workshops are facilitated by the PPT and focus upon topics salient to each practice-based learning such as:

1. Review of the University learning outcomes for each practice-based learning, and exploration of how these will facilitate the integration of theory and practice
2. Professional conduct during practice-based learning
3. Learning styles and the learning cycle
4. Professional and clinical reasoning
5. Reviewing Assessment Form for each PBL block
6. Preparation for, and review of self-evaluation on practice-based learning
7. Developing and using Learning Agreements during practice-based learning
8. Developing, and using a professional development portfolio.

To complement the workshops, learners complete an interactive on-line programme of study – Preceptor Education Programme (PEP) for Health Professionals and Learners [www.preceptor.ca/](http://www.preceptor.ca/) Each module (eight in total) takes about 30 minutes to complete including a reflective element. Learners download certificates of completion for each of the modules and store these in their PBL Passport.

**6.11. Codes of Ethics and Standards of Practice**

Prior to PBL1 each 1earner is provided with links to electronic copies of:

* Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics
* NHS Education for Scotland Quality Standards for Practice Learning <https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/s1mflta2/quality_standards_for_practice_learning_qspl.pdf>
* QMU Occupational Therapy Practice-based Learning Handbook
* Health Professions Council Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics
* Health Professions Council Guidance for Learners on Conduct and Ethics
* Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency: Occupational Therapist

## 6.12. Obtaining service users consent to occupational therapy

Gaining a service user’s consent to occupational therapy is a fundamental aspect of professional practice and as such learners are advised to observe guidance contained in the HCPC Guidance for Students on Conduct and Ethics (HCPC 2016), and RCOT Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics (RCOT 2021).

Throughout practice-based learning, learners are advised to ensure that:-

* service users have been informed that they are a learner
* service users have given their permission for any assessments and interventions to be carried out by the learner.

There will be situations where some service users cannot give consent, for example young children, or adults who lack capacity. In many of these cases, a responsible adult, usually a parent or guardian (or other person authorised to carry out this role) who is legally entitled to speak on their behalf will be asked to give their consent. This needs to be carefully and clearly recorded in the person’s care records. Learners will become aware of local policies about this and experience considering and implementing consent and capacity issues through practice-based learning experiences.

## 6.13. Confidentiality issues during practice-based learning

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

Learners are expected to adhere to and comply with guidance provided by the regulatory body (HCPC 2016; HCPC 2018) and the professional body (RCOT 2021) as well as referring to the NHS Scotland Code of Practice on Protecting Patient Confidentiality (NHS Scotland 2012).

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

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

People using occupational therapy services

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

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

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

Practice-based Learning organisations

It is important that learners do not specifically name staff or practice-based learning areas on any documents, or in assignments submitted to the university. Learners are advised to describe practice-based learning in general terms for example, “community rehabilitation team”, “vocational rehabilitation service”, “intensive psychiatric care unit”.

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

**7. Practice Educator Preparation**

eLearning modules are available on TURAS Learn <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/36925/being-and-becoming-an-ahppractice-educator>

* There are 5 learning outcomes aligned to Quality Standards for Practice Learning (QSPL) and HCPC Standards of Education and Training (SETs)
* Learning in each unit takes approximately 1-2 hours to complete. Completion of all units equates to the previous annual face to face one day training
* AHPs who have been working for 2 years should undertake this training as part of their Personal Development plan (PDP) to become a practice educator
* Existing AHP practice educators should undertake this training to update their knowledge and skills
* Included within this resource are reflective activities to add to professional portfolios.
* Each Higher Education Institute (HEI) has a named representative trained as an administrator.

QMU specific occupational therapy events:

Specific events will be facilitated by the QMU Professional Practice Tutors to cover university and profession specific requirements.

# 8. Contact mechanisms with and support for learners during practice-based learning

Support from the programme teams is provided in different ways throughout practice-based learning reflecting current demands for sustainable practices (WFOT 2018, RCOT 2019, RCOT 2021). Synchronous and asynchronous mechanisms are utilised.

## 8.1. Practice-based Learning handbook

The PBL handbook, which is available from the beginning of the programme, covers a range of issues and topics relating to practice-based learning. It also contains the e-mail addresses and contact telephone numbers for the occupational therapy team, and other University staff involved in supporting PBL.

## 8.2. Personal Academic Tutors

Personal Academic Tutors (PAT) act as the first point of contact for an identified group of learners and practice educators throughout each PBL block. The PAT offers support throughout practice-based learning, initiating contact with learners and PEs at the midway point of practice-based learning, and responding to initial requests for advice and support from PEs and their learners, normally within 24 hours (PAT’s working days).

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

## 8.3. Canvas

The Canvas PBL area houses a bank of useful resources and materials for learners. Resources include web links, sources of accommodation for practice-based learning, handbooks, assessment forms, templates for reflection and reading materials.

## 8.4. Drop–in practice-based learning sessions.

Drop-in sessions organised by the PPT are held virtually at varying points throughout each practice-based learning. Learners are encouraged to attend these sessions and share successes and issues they are experiencing on practice-based learning. The PPT acts as a facilitator and along with fellow learners, listens and provides support/ advice to peers.

## 8.5 Midway contact on practice-based learning

At the midway point of each PBL, PATs will email individual PEs and learners to gauge how the experience is progressing and whether support from the university is required or not. If support is required this will be tailored to suit the individual situation.

## 8.6 Complaints and problems on practice-based learning

If a learner is experiencing difficulties on practice-based learning or needs to discuss an issue with a member of academic staff they are advised to contact either their PAT or the PPT initially.

If an incident occurs outside of normal working hours and there is an urgent need to contact the university, please telephone 0131 474 0000. When prompted ask for reception.

## 8.7. Counselling Service and Wellbeing Service

Learners experiencing any personal difficulties while on practice-based learning are encouraged to use the Counselling Service <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/counselling-service/> or the Wellbeing Service <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/wellbeing-service/>

## 8.8 Practice-based learning debriefing workshops

Practice-based learning debriefing workshops, facilitated by the PPT are held at the concluding phase of each module offering learners a further opportunity to integrate the experience of the practice-based learning context with university. Learners are encouraged to use the practice-based learning Resume Tool to review their personal and professional development, discuss relevant issues, and prepare for future practice-based learning. The Career Development Framework (RCOT 2022) is utilised in these sessions.

Individual debriefing meetings are offered by the PPT to learners who have experienced challenges, ill health, or have failed the module.

# 9. Contact mechanisms with and support for Practice-based Learning providers and practice educators

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

At a national level, the university has strong links at various levels with representatives of NHS Education for Scotland. This brings opportunities for debating and exploring issues relating to practice-based learning, primarily in the NHS, but also in other organisations.

## 9.1. Developing new Practice-based Learning sites

Practical advice is available from the university to services considering the feasibility of offering practice-based learning to occupational therapy learners from QMU. For further information, contact the Occupational Therapy Professional Practice Tutors at the University.

## 9.2. Practice-based learning support website

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

## 9.3. Regional occupational therapy practice educator forums

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

## 9.4. Individual support

A student’s PAT is available to answer any queries or offer support and guidance during practice-based learning. Meetings (e.g. face-face, video conferencing) can be arranged at the request of the PE. The PAT acts as the first point of contact throughout a student’s practice-based learning responding to requests for information, or advice, normally within 24 hours (PAT’s working days)

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

# 10. Learning outcomes for practice-based learning

Each practice-based learning module has a unique set of learning outcomes, devised by the university. These outcomes articulate with prior and future university studies and previous practice-based learning modules. Learning outcomes increase in complexity as the learner progresses through the programme. Each practice-based learning module provides one of the building blocks for future ones.

During each practice-based learning module, learners are given half a day of study per week (3.5 hours). The study time forms part of the working week and is included in the overall hours for the practice-based learning. This half day may be used in a flexible way and is negotiated with the PE.

Learners should receive daily informal supervision throughout the practice-based learning, including a minimum of one hour formal supervision with the PE each week. Learners are expected to prepare for and actively contribute towards the midway and final evaluations of their performance.

## 10.1 Practice-based Learning Passport

This module enables learners to demonstrate that they have completed all of the mandatory learning activities and tasks required in preparation for practice-based learning. The content of this module is covered in sections 6.2 - 6.11 of this handbook. This module is graded on a pass/ fail basis by the PPT.

## 10.2. Practice-based Learning 1 (PBL1)

PBL1 offers learners the first opportunity of learning in a practice setting. They are acquiring knowledge and a repertoire of foundational skills for functioning in a practice-based learning setting. Learners observe, practice and reflect on their performance. Where appropriate they take an active role with service users, applying knowledge and developing professional reasoning skills.

PBL1 is of six weeks duration, full time and is located in Year 1, Semester 2. By the end of PBL1 learners should have successfully completed in the region of 225 hours (30 days equivalent) of practice-based learning.

Learning outcomes for PBL1

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

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

Practice-based Learning 1 recommended reading list

ALSOP, A., 2014. Continuing professional development in health and social care: strategies for lifelong learning. 2nd ed. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

DUNCAN, E.A.S., ed. 2020. Foundations for practice in occupational therapy. 6th ed. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone/Elsevier.

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL. 2016. Guidance on conduct and ethics for learners. London: Health and Care Professions Council

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL. 2013. Standards of Proficiency: Occupational Therapist. London: Health and Care Professions Council.

JASPER, M., 2013. Beginning reflective practice. 2nd ed. Australia: Cengage Learning

POLGASE, T. & TRESEDER, R., 2012. The occupational therapy handbook: practice education. Keswick: M &K Update.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2021. Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

ROBERTS, G.,W. & MACHON, A., 2015. Appreciative healthcare practice: a guide to compassionate person-centred care. Keswick: M & K Update.

## 10.3. Practice-based Learning 2 (PBL2)

Practice-based learning 2 encourages learners to draw upon and integrate knowledge from their university-based studies and previous learning from PBL1. During this practice-based learning they actively contribute to the practice setting. Emphasis is on practice and experience of the occupational therapy process, problem solving and communication.

PBL2 is of six weeks duration, full time and is located in Year 1, at the end of Semester 2 for the MSc programme, and Year 2, end of semester 2 for the 4-year route. By the end of PBL2, learners should have successfully completed in the region of 225 hours (30 days equivalent) of practice-based learning.

Learning outcomes for PBL2

On completion of this module the learner will be able to:-

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

Practice-based Learning 2 recommended reading list

ALSOP, A., 2014. Continuing professional development in health and social care: strategies for lifelong learning. 2nd ed. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL. 2016. Guidance on conduct and ethics for students. London: Health and Care Professions Council

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL. 2013. Standards of Proficiency: Occupational Therapist. London: Health and Care Professions Council.

JASPER, M., 2013. Beginning reflective practice. 2nd ed. Australia: Cengage Learning

POLGASE,T. & TRESEDER, R., 2012. The occupational therapy handbook: practice education. Keswick: M &K Update.

ROBERTS, G.,W. & MACHON, A. 2015. Appreciative healthcare practice: a guide to compassionate person-centred care. Keswick: M & K Update.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2018. Embracing risk; enabling choice. Guidance for occupational therapists. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2021. Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

## 10.4. Practice-based Learning 3 (PBL3)

The third practice practice-based learning module will enable learners to broaden and consolidate their knowledge and skills. They gain a greater degree of autonomy, adopting a co-worker role with their PEs and assume joint responsibility for all aspects of service provision. Learners are actively involved in the supervisory process and engage in self-analysis and reflection accurately analysing and appropriately altering their own behaviour.

PBL3 is 9 weeks long and in the MSc programme is located Year 2, Semester 1. For the learners on the four-year MSc programme this is in Year 3, semester 1. By the end of the PP3 module learners should have successfully completed in the region of 337.5 hours (45 days equivalent) of practice-based learning.

Learning outcomes for PBL3

On completion of this module learners will be able to:

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

Practice-based Learning 3 recommended reading list

ALSOP, A., 2014. Continuing professional development in health and social care: strategies for lifelong learning. 2nd ed. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

COLE, MB., and J. CREEK, J,. eds. 2016. Global perspectives in professional reasoning. Thorofare, NJ: Slack Incorporated,

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL. 2016. Guidance on conduct and ethics for students. London: Health and Care Professions Council.

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL. 2013. Standards of Proficiency: Occupational Therapist. London: Health and Care Professions Council.

HIGGS,. J., JENSEN, GM., LOFTUS, S & CHRISTENSEN, N. eds. 2019. Clinical reasoning in the health professions. Edinburgh, Elsevier.

POLGASE,T. & TRESEDER, R., 2012. The occupational therapy handbook: practice education. Keswick: M &K Update.

ROBERTSON, L., ed. 2012. Clinical reasoning in occupational therapy: Controversies in practice Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2017. *The Career Development Framework: Guiding Principles for Occupational Therapy.* London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2017. *The Career Development Framework: Guiding Principles for Occupational Therapy. Implementation Guide.* London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2021. Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

THEW, M et al. 2011. Role Emerging Occupational Therapy. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

## 10.5. Practice-based Learning 4 (PBL4)

Practice-based Learning 4 (PBL4) is the final practice-based learning module prior to graduation. At this level learners will be expected to assume responsibility for a small caseload under minimal supervision.

PBL4 is ten weeks long, full time and is located in Year 2, Semester 2 for the MSc programme. In the MSc, four-year programme, it is located in Year 4, Semester 2. By the end of the PBL4 module, learners should have successfully completed in the region of 375 hours (50 days equivalent) of practice-based learning.

Learning outcomes for PBL4

On completion of this module learners will be able to:

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

Practice-based Learning 4 recommended reading list

ALSOP, A., 2014. Continuing professional development in health and social care: strategies for lifelong learning. 2nd ed. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

FAZIO, F.S., 2017. Developing occupation-centred programs for the community. 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL. 2016. Guidance on conduct and ethics for students. London: Health and Care Professions Council.

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL. 2013. Standards of Proficiency: Occupational Therapist. London: Health and Care Professions Council.

KRONENBERG, F., POLLARD, N. & SAKELLARIOU, D., eds. 2016. Occupational therapy without borders. 2nd Ed: integrating justice with practice. Edinburgh: Elsevier.

NUSSBAUM, M.C., 2013. Creating capabilities: The Human Development Approach. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

POLGASE,T. & TRESEDER, R., 2012. The occupational therapy handbook: practice education. Keswick: M &K Update.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2017. The Career Development Framework: Guiding Principles for Occupational Therapy. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2017. The Career Development Framework: Guiding Principles for Occupational Therapy. Implementation Guide. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS. 2021. Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics. London: Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

TOWNSEND, E. & POLATAJAKO, H., eds. 2013. Enabling occupation II: advancing an occupational therapy vision for health, well-being, and justice through occupation. 2nd ed. Ottowa: Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists.

# 11. Guidance for learners and practice educators: Fitness to practise

## 11.1. University Fitness to Practise Panel

The University has an obligation to ensure that learners and graduates from its pre

registration healthcare programmes are fit to practise. Fitness to practise has been

interpreted to mean that a person has the skills, knowledge, character and health to

undertake their professional role safely and effectively. This means the university

needs to consider whether learners:

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

Learners studying to become a professional in a regulated profession have certain

responsibilities and they are expected to meet high standards of conduct and ethics

throughout their studies. Learners studying on the occupational therapy pre-

registration programme at QMU are informed that their conduct outside the practice

environment, including their private lives, may have an impact on their fitness to

practise. This is set out in the requirements of the regulatory body, the Health and

Care Professions Council. Such requirements are designed to ensure that their

behaviour justifies the trust that service users and the public place in their

profession.

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

Fitness to practice policy: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/fitness-to-practise-healthcare-programmes/>

## 11.2. Monitoring learners’ fitness to practice

Fitness to practise is monitored through the following procedures:

On application

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

During the programme

1. Learners are required to declare whether or not they have a conviction or caution as part of the annual matriculation process.
2. Learners are required to work within the framework of the Health and Care Professions Councils Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Learners (HCPC 2016), and the RCOT Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics (RCOT 2021), and the University Fitness to Practise policy.
3. Learners are required to complete an annual self-declaration of Fitness to Practise Form prior to each practice practice-based learning.
4. Records of absence will be kept for each learner noting the duration and the reasons for absence. Learners must inform both the PE, and university of any absences from practice-based learning. A supporting medical certificate must be obtained to cover absences of five working days or more.
5. All learners are expected to adopt a responsible attitude towards attendance at classes and practice-based learning.

# 12. Guidance for learners and practice educators: How to work with a learner who develops a health-related issue during PBL.

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

## 12.1. Learner self-declaration of health prior to practice-based learning

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

Guiding principles

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

## 12.2. What to do if a learner develops a health issue during practice-based learning

Learners developing a health issue during practice practice-based learning that significantly impacts on their performance, safety of self or others are advised to discuss their situation with the PE, and their PAT or PPT as soon as possible.

Guiding principles

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

# 13. Guidelines for learners and practice educators: How to work with a learner who is displaying unprofessional behaviours during practice-based learning

The nature of the work undertaken by learners and the conditions to be met for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council require specific standards of conduct associated with professional status and practice. During practice-based learning, learners remain accountable to the university for their professional conduct.

All learners on practice-based learning are assessed on their professional conduct. The assessment of this is based on the Health and Care Professions Council Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Learners (HCPC 2016), and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics (RCOT 2021).

## 13.1. Expected professional behaviours during practice-based learning

Professionalism can be regarded as a meta skill, comprising situational awareness and contextual judgement (HCPC 2014). The true skill of professionalism may be not so much in knowing what to do, but when to do it. The role of the practice educator is to raise the student’s awareness of this.

Throughout practice-based learning it is expected that learners, at all times will:-

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

## 13.2. Examples of unprofessional behaviours

Examples deemed to be evidence of unprofessional behaviours include but are not limited to:-

* Adverse reactions and/or inappropriate behaviours relating to individuals referred to occupational therapy, and/or specific client groups
* Angry feedback to PE, arguing with PE about grade awarded for practice-based learning
* Offensive, undermining, slanderous inappropriate communications about peers, service users, staff, and other colleagues, practice-based learning provider, and/or the university
* Attitudes such as disloyalty, dishonesty, intolerance, irresponsibility, lack of commitment, lack of initiative, unreliability
* Breach of confidentiality, misuse of confidential material relating to a service user
* Boundary violations with service users, and/or colleagues
* Deliberate misuse of equipment or materials, or monies of the practice-based learning site
* Deliberate falsification of facts, as in lying or attempting to defame colleagues, or service users. For example, making false claims for practice-based learning expenses, lying about practice-based earning attendance, falsely claiming to have undertaken activities with a service
* Failure to carry out agreed actions without explanation
* Failure to recognise factors, and respond to issues affecting health and well being as a health care student, and to take appropriate steps to minimise harm to self and others
* Unsatisfactory standards of record keeping
* Inappropriate dress and appearance for practice-based learning
* Incapacity for practice-based learning due to the influence of alcohol, or use or possession of illegal substances
* Persistent absenteeism without good cause
* Regular and/or repeated lack of focus of attention to learning on practice-based learning due to anything that has an effect on performance, for example undeclared ill health
* Repeated failure to respond to feedback from appropriate others in relation to performance and behaviour.

## 13.3. Points of guidance for failure, and/or early termination of Practice-based Learning on ground of a student’s unprofessional behaviour.

Stage 1

The PE must:

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

Stage 2

If the above does not remove concerns about professional behaviour, it is essential that the PE involves the student’s PAT or the PPT in all discussions about the learner’s behaviour.

The PAT or PPT will discuss with the PE the nature of the incident, and document the PEs concerns on the Link Lecturer’s Report Form. Reference will be made to the appropriate assessment criteria and, where appropriate, the relevant sections of the HCPC Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Learners (HCPC 2016), and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and ethics (RCOT 2021). A copy of the Link Lecturer’s Report will be retained in the learner’s file at the university.

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

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

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

* + the time by which the learner can reasonably effect an improvement;
  + the PEs need to make an robust assessment of the improvement;
  + the likelihood of any re-occurrence;
  + any other factors relevant to the individual situation.

Throughout this process, PEs must refer to the relevant assessment criteria, and continue to document their observations of the learner’s behaviour/ performance. Similarly, any discussion with the learner relating to his/her behaviour/ performance whilst on practice-based learning is documented in the supervision record by the PE.

Stage 3

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

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

The PE must complete the Practice-based Learning Assessment Form, documenting all issues arising during practice-based learning. We ask that the completed Assessment Form is returned to the University within 5 working days of the student’s removal from the practice-based learning setting.

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

# 14. Guidance for learners and practice educators: Delegation and health and safety in the workplace

# Learners are required to adhere at all times to health and safety policies that apply to the area in which they are working. If an incident occurs during practice-based learning, learners must inform their PAT.

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

During practice-based learning, learners must ensure that they:-

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

Learners are expected to familiarise themselves with departmental health and safety policies whilst on practice-based learning and recognise the importance of safe practice and risk assessment when undertaking their work related to practice-based learning. PEs must ensure that learners receive an induction into relevant departmental policies and procedures at the setting of the practice-based learning.

The PE has a duty of care towards all of the service users on their caseload and a responsibility for case management. As such, learners undertake aspects of the occupational therapy process under the direction of the PE (RCOT 2021) It is inappropriate for learners to take decisions regarding admission, discharge, or referral of clients to other agencies, other than in consultation with the PE.

## 14.1. Lone working in the community

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

Guiding principles

* PEs must exercise their judgement in the selection of appropriate home, or community visits for the learner to carry out alone. This includes taking into account the abilities, and experience of learners, nature of the visit and level of responsibility required
* Before making unaccompanied visits, learners must be given the opportunity to experience community visits with the PE and/or other staff
* Before the visit the PE should discuss and explore anticipated issues with the learner so that they are aware of the level of responsibility they are required to take
* After the visit the PE and the learner should discuss and reflect on the experience.

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

Guiding principles

* The PE and/or learner follow local policy related to incident reporting and health and safety.
* The PE supports the learner through this process as a learning opportunity. However if disciplinary procedures are required for learners, the Queen Margaret University Fitness to Practise policy (QMU no date) would be considered.
* The PE and learner inform the service manager of the practice-based learning site and complete relevant documentation.
* The PE/ service manager, and the learner should inform the student’s PAT of the incident immediately.
* The PAT discusses any action required with the PE/ service manager and informs the PPT/ Programme Leader.
* The PAT documents that such a discussion has taken place using the Link Lecturer’s Report Form. A copy of this report will be retained in the learner’s file at the university.

## 14.3. Raising and escalating concerns about safety or well-being of service users or carers during Practice-based Learning

Key Points

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

**Seeking Advice**

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

\*Independent confidential advice is available from your professional body, trade union or PCaW.² Students can also speak with their personal academic tutor.

² Public Concern at Work ([www.pcaw.org.uk](http://www.pcaw.org.uk))

**Stage 2**

**Escalate your concern:**

1. Internally to a higher level (Senior Practitioner)

2. Contact your QMU Professional Practice Tutor or Programme Leader

If unable to do this for any reason OR

Concern not addressed adequately and/or immediate risk to others

**Stage 1**

**Raise your concern**:

1. Internally with your Practice Educator

2. With your QMU Professional Practice Tutor or Programme Leader

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

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

Adapted from BSc Hons Nursing Guidance

**14.4 National Whistleblowing Standards**

The National Whistleblowing Standards describe how organisations must provide protection and support for people who speak up about harm or wrong doing. The standards can be found here <https://inwo.spso.org.uk/national-whistleblowing-standards> and there is a specific section covering students here <https://inwo.spso.org.uk/arrangements-students-and-trainees>

# 15. Guidance for learners and practice educators: Acceptable use of social media, information communication technologies (ICT) and other mobile devices during practice-based learning

## 15.1. Using official ICT facilities, and mobile devices during practice-based learning

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

It is important therefore that when learners go out on practice-based learning that they make it a priority to familiarise themselves with local regulations. This will give learners a better understanding of what is permitted and what is not.

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

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

Keep safe

As a Health Sciences learner your studies may involve internet searches drawing upon on anatomical terms and phrases. This may generate unwanted links to objectionable websites. You are advised to use wherever possible, specific health science related search engines. Even if you are careful you may accidentally access internet sites you did not mean to. This might happen because you clicked on a misleading link, you clicked on a link by accident, or because a site has been ‘hijacked’. You may also find that you get bombarded by unsolicited and explicit ‘pop-up’ advertising. If any of these things happen whilst learners on practice-based learning, you should:-

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

There may be an investigation into your on-line activities, but if the accident was legitimate and these steps are followed, it should be resolved quickly.

## 15.2. Using social media

The university acknowledges that social media is a significant part of peoples’ lives and is a positive way to keep in touch and share information. However, there have been occurrences where social media has been used for less positive reasons, hence the need for this guidance to support responsible usage.

Health and social care professionals could be putting their registration at risk if posting inappropriate comments about service users and colleagues or posting any material that could be considered explicit. The Health and Care Professions Council (2020), and the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT 2019) have both produced statements/briefings on the use of social media. These can be found at:

* <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/meeting-our-standards/communication-and-using-social-media/guidance-on-use-of-social-media/> <https://www.rcot.co.uk/promoting-occupational-therapy/using-social-media>

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

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

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

The following points are offered as guidance:

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

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

# 16. Guidance for learners and practice educators: Supervision during collaborative or project-focussed practice-based learning

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

In addition to section 3 of this document, there are additional responsibilities for this type of practice-based learning as outlined below.

## 16.1. “Long-arm” Practice Educator responsibilities

* Review University practice-based learning documentation, and practice-based learning provider information prior to the practice-based learning commencing.
* Receive information prior to practice-based learning from learner and respond accordingly.
* Undertake a visit to the host organisation with learner where possible/ required.
* Meet with the learner if a joint visit to the host organisation is not possible.
* To support the learner(s) to maintain an occupational perspective in the setting.
* To provide guidance with linking knowledge into practice, signpost learner to resources, and facilitate learner reflection.
* Assess the learner in relation to the university learning outcomes for the practice-based learning module, and the learner’s Learning Agreement.
* Undertake midway, and final evaluations of the learner’s performance, in conjunction with the on-site mentor, and learner
* To be available for learner e-mail/ phone contacts/ Skype calls.
* Evaluate the practice-based learning using the mechanisms for practice-based learning monitoring.

## 16.2. On-site mentor responsibilities

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

## 16.3. Learner responsibilities

* To be self-directed in identifying their own leaning needs using the Learning Agreement, whilst collaborating with the OT PE and on-site mentor on its development
* To record reflections and share these with OT PE and on-site mentor as appropriate
* To discuss the delegation of tasks with an appropriate member of

staff prior to taking any action, ensuring the person to whom the task has been delegated to has the appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and information to carry out the tasks safely and effectively.

* To ensure that any project or individual pieces of work are concluded within the timeframe of the practice-based learning, or are sustainable
* To seek out support and guidance related to any aspect of practice-based learning if there are any uncertainties or risk related to service users, staff or themselves
* Undertake all agreed contacts and communication relating to supervision
* Complete paperwork and evaluate the experience as required

Practice-based learning Agreements are negotiated by the university and the practice-based earning provider and are a statement of the principles which will apply to the provision of practice-based learning. ‘Long-arm’ OT practice educators and on-site mentors are encouraged to attend practice educator training events hosted by the university.

# 17. Guidance for learners and practice educators: practice-based learning assessment process

PEs and learners have access to paper and electronic copies of the practice-based learning assessment forms. These can be used throughout practice-based learningas a basis for discussion between to help learners with self-reflection on their own performance. The purpose of the assessment process is to:-

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

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

## 17.1. Mid way review (formative assessment)

The midway review takes the form of a discussion between the PE, and the learner highlighting areas of progress across the specific university learning outcomes for each practice-based learning module. It guides the actions to be taken by the PE and the learner during the remainder of the practice-based learning. Areas requiring further development and priorities still to be addressed should be highlighted, agreed and documented in the “development plan” section of the assessment form.

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

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

Midway review comments must be signed and dated by both PE and learner.

## 17.2. Final evaluation (summative assessment)

The final evaluation should be completed at least one day before the end of the practice-based learning and discussed with the learner. This provides the learner with the opportunity to review the report before signing it and returning it to the PE.

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

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

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

Learners must pass all University learning outcomes for each practice-based learning module. All of the criteria for each learning outcome must be passed to achieve an overall pass grade for practice-based learning.

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

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

## 17.3. Final evaluation: service user feedback

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

## 17.4. Compiling the assessment form

The following list of points is intended to assist PEs in the compilation of the assessment forms. Feedback should be:

1. **Individualised and relevant***,* demonstrating attention to the particular
2. to the learning goals of the student. At the mid-way appraisal learning objectives development needs of the learner, rather than comparing with or generalising to other learners.
3. **Goal-directed,** providing assistance and increased understanding of what is expected or required, with a focus on the needs of the service users and relationship may need modification or new ones developed. It is helpful to summarise the key points in the PEs comments section in the form of a development/action plan.
4. **Behaviour-focused**, rather than personality focused. Feedback that refers to what the learner does, allows scope for change.
5. **Respectful,** demonstrating mindfulness of acceptable boundaries, respecting confidentiality and using language that is non-judgemental.
6. **Balanced**, comment on strengths and what the learner did well with areas of weakness or that require further growth. Written feedback should be constructive and structured so that learners are clear about specific aspects of their performance requiring further development and/or improvement.
7. **Collaborative***,* inviting learner involvement and agreement in identifying strengths and weaknesses, in seeking solutions, reaching conclusions and formulating plans for future action, facilitating self-evaluation.
8. **Change focused (non-evaluative**), exploring specific strategies to maintain strengths and improve weaknesses and facilitating a problem-solving approach that highlights the consequences both positive and negative of particular behaviours or actions. Encourage improvement with practical and specific suggestions and evidence required from the learner to demonstrate further achievement.
9. **Factual (not generalised**), providing evidence-based examples based on observed performance that highlight actual strengths and weaknesses of modifiable behaviours that have been observed. Provide specific suggestions for improvements to what learners are doing, or occasions where positive behaviour was demonstrated, and discussing outcomes of each behaviour.
10. **Aligned** to the university grade descriptors. Check for congruence between written comments and the actual grade(s) awarded

## 17.5. Awarding an overall grade for learners’ performance during practice-based learning

Assessment forms are graded in the range A\*- F according to the Queen Margaret University criteria for undergraduate modules (QMU, 2021). In assigning an overall grade, practice educators are expected to refer to the University Grade Descriptors provided in the assessment forms and identify the final grade awarded by circling one of the grades on the front page of the assessment form.

A learner awarded a grade D or above by the PE is considered to be safe in practice and will pass the practice-based learning module. The final grade is subsequently converted into a percentage by the PPT in line with University grade to mark conversion rules. (QMU, 2021).

PEs should always bear in mind that they are making a judgement about the learners performance in relation to what is reasonably expected of a learner at that level of the programmeand not in comparison with a qualified occupational therapist.

**Grade A\*: Pass - Outstanding Performance**

In allocating this grade the PE is recognising an outstanding performance. For the level of the programme an outstanding, exceptionally able, safe performance consistently demonstrated throughout the whole of practice-based learning.

**Grade A: Pass - Excellent Performance**

In allocating this grade the PE is recognising an excellent performance. For the level of the programme, an excellent, safe performance, consistently demonstrated throughout the whole of practice-based learning

**Grade B: Pass - Very good performance**

In allocating this grade the PE is recognising a very good performance. For the level of the programme, a very good, safe performance, consistently demonstrated throughout the majority of practice-based learning.

**Grade C: Pass - Good performance**

In allocating this grade the PE is recognising a good performance. For the level of the programme, a good, safe performance consistently demonstrated for the majority of the practice-based learning.

**Grade D: Pass - Satisfactory performance**

In allocating this grade the PE is recognising a satisfactory performance. For the level of the programme a satisfactory, safe, performance consistently demonstrated for the second half of the practice-based learning. Additional engagement may be required to sustain and enhance performance in subsequent practice-based learning modules.

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| **A Learner who is awarded an overall grade D or above, is considered to be safe in practice and will pass practice-based learning** |

**Grade E: Fail - Unsatisfactory performance**

In allocating this grade the PE is recognisinganunsatisfactory performance for the level of the programme. The learner has made some attempt to address issues in the practice-based learning setting, but does not meet the criteria outlined for an acceptable performance in several areas of practice. Shows very limited ability to learn from previous experience.

**Grade F: Fail – Unsatisfactory performance**

In allocating this grade the PE is recognisingan unsatisfactory performance. There is an unsatisfactory attempt to address issues in the practice-based learning setting and the learner does not meet the criteria outlined for an acceptable performance in a significant number of areas of practice. Shows little or no ability to learn from previous experience.

## 17.6. Guidance for awarding an A\*, or A grade

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

* Keep written records of A\* and A standard performance across the learning outcomes. These might have been observed by the PE or reported by other members of staff
* Ask the learner to provide his/her own examples of A\* and A standard performance
* If the learner is achieving the equivalent of an A\* or A standard performance at the midway review stage, or final evaluation, speak with the PPT
* Keep learners informed of this process so that they are aware they need to consistently demonstrate evidence of an A\* or A standard performance**.**

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

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| **PEs experiencing difficulties reaching a final decision**  **are actively encouraged to contact the PPT** |

## 17.7. Practice-based Learning time cards

Attendance is monitored by the learner’s PE throughout practice-based learning. All absences from practice-based learning must be recorded on the learner’s time cards, and the relevant section of the Assessment Form. These records are taken into account when references are provided for learners.

Learner recorded time is from the start of the shift until the end of the shift (as approved by the PE). Lunch breaks are excluded. Minutes should be rounded up/down to nearest 30 minutes.

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| **Important!**  **Hours accrued in failed practice-based learning modules cannot compensate for time lost in subsequent practice-based learning experiences (RCOT, 2019a).**  **Absence of a written record of the appropriate number of practice-based learning hours may result in learners having to complete extra practice-based learning hours prior to graduation.** |

## 17.8. How to support a learner at risk of failing practice-based learning

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

In failing practice-based learning, a learner is being made aware that for whatever reason they have failed to reach a satisfactory standard in the required learning outcomes for the practice-based learning module.

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

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

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

The PE must contact the learner’s PAT to discuss the most appropriate form of action to ensure support for both learner and the PE. Whilst each situation will vary and requires to be handled appropriately, there are key aspects to consider in this situaiton. Honesty is paramount and requires both PE and learner to be open within the relationship. Clarity is important: make sure the learner is very clear as to the areas they are failing and how they might best address these. This will involve the setting of daily or weekly goals/objectives for the rest of the practice-based learning so that the learner has an agreed plan to move forward with. The learner’s PAT can help in any of this process. The PAT will document agreed actions taken on the Link Lecturer’s Report Form. A copy of this report will be held in the learner’s file at the university.

Guiding principles

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

## 17.9. Receiving a fail grade on practice-based learning

A learner who fails a practice-based learning module is permitted one attempt only to retrieve this. Hours accrued during failed practice-based earning do not count towards the minimum requirement of 1000 hours (RCOT 2019a). If the module is ultimately failed, and retrieval processes for the module have been exhausted then the learner will be asked to withdraw from the named award. A learner may also be denied the opportunity to retrieve the module if the failure originally occurred on substantiated grounds of fitness to practise concerns (RCOT, 2019a).

The PPT offers an individual appointment to every learner who has failed practice-based learning, to discuss and prepare for the retrieval of this.

## 17.10. Discontinuation of a practice-based learning

Discontinuation of practice-based learning is a rare event, however it can occur and each situation is unique. It is important that all involved in this decision be as objective as possible, are clear about the relevant evidence that they have, follow the appropriate procedures, seek advice and record decisions and outcomes.

Practice-based learning may be terminated for reasons related to the learner, the PE, the practice-based learning site, or a combination of all of these.

Reasons related to the learner.

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

Reasons related to the PE

* PE competency, and/or conduct issues
* Personal issues

Reason related to the practice-based learning site

* Staffing shortages
* Service user related issues
* Outbreak of infectious disease

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

Possible actions might be:

* Practice-based learning continues with extra support from the setting and the university
* Another PE is able to facilitate the practice-based learning in the same area
* Another PE is able to facilitate the practice-based learning in a different area
* The practice-based learning module terminated is taken at another time dependant upon decisions made by the Board of Examiners
* In the instance of a pass standard being unachievable, resulting in failing practice-based learning, consultation between the learner, PPT and the Programme Leader will take place to determine the most appropriate way forward.

## 17.11. Deferring practice-based Learning

Learners who are unable for legitimate reasons to undertake practice-based learning at the allotted time will have their practice-based learning arranged at a deferred time. This will count as a first attempt.

## 17.12. Scheduling of a deferred or retrieval practice-based Learning

Normally, a retrieval, or deferred practice-based learning takes place over the summer before the learner progresses to the next level of the programme. Ultimately, this is dependent upon decisions taken by the Board of Examiners, and the availability of an appropriate practice-based learning offer.

## 17.13. Learner evaluation of practice-based learning

At the conclusion of each practice-based learning expereince, learners complete an Evaluation of Practice-based Learning Form offering constructive feedback to the PE, the practice-based learning provider and the university to enable ongoing enhancement of the learning environment. A copy of this form is retained by the practice-based learning provider. The signed original copy must be returned the university by the learner.

## 17.14. Assessment paper work submission

Learners are responsible for ensuring the return of completed assessment paper work to the university. The Assessment Form, and Learner Evaluation of Practice-based Learning Form must be submitted by the learner to the drop boxes in the University virtual learning environment (Canvas) within five working days of completion of placement.

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| **Important!**  **PEs are asked to ensure that learners are given a fully signed master copy of the completed Assessment Form and Learner Evaluation of Practice-based Learning Form before leaving the site.** |

Learners must make copies of completed paperwork for their own records before submission to Canvas. The practice-based learning team cannot respond to requests from learners for copies of completed paperwork at a later date.

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

## 17.15. Appeals procedure

A learner wishing to appeal against a decision about a grade received for practice-

based learning may do so by following the procedures, and practices set out in the

Academic Appeals Regulations

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/academic-appeals-regulations/student-guide-to-academic-appeals/>

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