

**UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH**

Faculty of Health

BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science

Module Handbook

Academic Year 2023-24

Placement

(students)



individual requirements sufficiently far in advance to enable us to advise you on the range of options available and to put in place appropriate arrangements.

So please ensure you have told us about any disability even if you do not think it will affect you while you are at the University.

If you have already told us about a disability we may ask you for further information or invite you for an information meeting (with the Disability Advisor, faculty representative, and accommodation officer) if necessary. We can then properly assess, in discussion with you, your individual requirements and ensure that we have the best possible chance of having any necessary adjustments in place at the start of your course. We can also advise you further about claiming for Disabled Students' Allowance.

If you have a disability, but have not yet told us about it, please contact the University's Disability Services on:

Tel: 01752 587676



Email: studentservices@plymouth.ac.uk.



While we can make reasonable adjustments to our provision, we may not be able to meet your individual requirements if we do not have the opportunity to assess them in advance, and that could affect negatively on your experience of the course or even your ability to complete your course, or to take up your place.

Please respond positively to any requests from us for information. We can then explore with you the support available such as assistive technologies, study skills sessions and personal enablers. We can also address any health and safety issues and relevant academic or professional expectations and if necessary advise you on alternative

options. Any information you give us will be dealt with in confidence and only shared within the University with your consent and on a 'need to know' basis. We want to give you the best possible chance to take up your place, to be ready for study and to be able successfully to complete your university course.

The Disability Services Centre is accessible through the student services hub in Charles Seale-Hayne Library. The Assessment Centre provides a Needs Assessments for prospective HE learners across the SW region, and for University of Plymouth learners. (Note: The Assessment Centre DOES NOT perform diagnostic dyslexia assessments.)

Please go to the [Learning Development](#) website for all the information you need.

Personal tutors will also reach out on a frequent basis to support students and educators, it is the responsibility of students to arrange these meetings.

DISCLAIMER

PLEASE NOTE

All students undertaking programmes delivered by the Faculty of Health are reminded that any alteration to the University documentation, including practice portfolios, involving forgery/falsification of a mentors comments or Signature/initialling will be investigated. This investigation could lead to disciplinary action, which may lead to a student's being unable to achieve professional registration.

All the information in this Handbook is correct at the time of printing. Courses are regularly reviewed and updated so details may change.

The University of Plymouth is proud of its teaching and research and it undertakes all reasonable steps to provide educational services in the manner set out in this

Handbook and in any documents referred to within it. However, it does not guarantee the provision of such services. Should industrial action or circumstances beyond the control of the University interfere with its ability to provide educational services, the University undertakes to use all reasonable steps to minimise the resultant disruption to those services.



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FRONTLINE PLACEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Practical Placement, a partly theoretical and heavily practical focussed module that will equip students with the knowledge and understanding required to manage a variety of patients, using clinical skills associated with the paramedic role.

This handbook provides information specific to the module and is to be read in addition to the [BSc \(Hons\) Paramedic Science Programme Handbook](#) and the [University of Plymouth Student Handbook](#).

We hope practice placement will enhance your development for professional practice in Paramedicine and further support your commitment to lifelong learning. The content of this module is integral to paramedic practice and can be challenging; however, I am sure the commitment you give to your study will be rewarded in relation to your knowledge and performance. Similar modules have demonstrated that the support of your peer group will be an immensely valuable learning aid; however, please do not hesitate to contact us or any other member of the module team, should you wish to discuss aspects of the module or experience any difficulties.

Wishing you enjoyment, safety and success in your studies,

Anna Harvey



Role of the Placement Lead

The role of the placement leader is to ensure that your practical learning experience is a positive one. It is the module leader's responsibility to ensure the smooth running of the module and to give you guidance and support as required. If you have any queries or concerns you should in the first instance draw these to the module leader's attention.

Placement Lead

Name: Anna Harvey

01752 588068



Email:

anna.harvey@plymouth.ac.uk



Useful Contacts:

Library General Enquiry Line: 01752 560801

Subject Librarian (Health Professions): 01752 587123

Programme Administration: 01752 588800

Meet the Team

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PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

The Quality Assurance Agency ([QAA](#)) (2017) identified work-based learning as “learning that is integral to a higher education programme and is usually achieved and demonstrated through engagement with a workplace environment, the assessment of reflective practice and the designation of appropriate learning outcomes”. Learning in the workplace, therefore, is a fundamental component of this programme. The QAA also publish and maintain The UK Quality Code.

The BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science programme is three years in duration. The time you spend in practice will focus on developing your skills, knowledge and experience. You will be assessed in practice, in part against the Health and Care Professionals Council's (2016) [Code of Conduct for Learners](#).

All of the placements have been worked out to facilitate the best use of clinical practice time balanced against the demand by the paramedic programme and other health care related programmes alongside the capacity of the placement area to accommodate learners. Often it is a challenge but on the whole the programme does afford plenty of appropriate clinical practice time in locations that will facilitate a learner to meet their learning needs.

We will aim to have an observation/induction experience in an ambulance setting, prior to your first placement block (first year only). This will not necessarily be at the station you will be eventually allocated to. This experience allows learners to familiarise themselves prior to placement, with the aim of being a reassuring informative experience, the local ambulance service trust will also provide you with induction information on this day.

The programme is designed to enable you to practice safely, confidently and competently in a variety of relevant clinical settings. In order to do this you will experience a range of different placements/specialty areas over each academic year. This will include frontline ambulance service work for emergency and urgent care and may also include a short placement in a non-ambulance setting.

This handbook aims to provide you and your placement host with important information needed to guide you through the practice element of your programme of study. These guidelines work in conjunction with other important course documents available on your [DLE](#)

Allocations

Your station and Practice Educator (PEd) will be confirmed approximately 8 weeks prior to your first placement block in, in line with other allied health professions within the school. These details will be released via [Placements on the Web \(POW\)](#). Allocation of your PEd is arranged with both University address and home address in mind, based upon the University [footprint](#) within the South Western Ambulance Service

Foundation Trust (SWASfT). The area covered is; Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. SWASfT are unable to place learners outside of these areas due to other HEI commitments.

Placement allocations are informed by available PEd and overall capacity within the station. In order to be fair to all learners we endeavour to allocate all placement learner within one and a half hours travelling time from the learner's specified addresses, based upon an online route planner by car. This is in agreement with the University of Plymouth (UoP) and SWASfT. Learners, who do not have access to a car, will be reviewed on an individual basis, however it is the responsibility of the learner to fully complete the practice element. Once the allocations have been arranged and released learners cannot arrange swaps under any circumstances. Learners are also not permitted to arrange their own placement, the capacity of the stations are closely monitored by the Trust, it is therefore imperative that all placement allocations are completed by the team with a strategic view in mind.

Learners who find themselves in a financially difficult position should seek advice in the first instance from [Finance Information](#), it can be challenging maintaining study and practice placements, so if you need to please seek support from the placement team paramedicplacements@plymouth.ac.uk

Learning in the Practice Area

There is a programme illustration on your [DLE](#) to allow you to identify the range of clinical placements that will occur. Being aware of the different dates of modules and placements will enable you to plan your studies more effectively. The ranges of placements provide exposure within health and social care, and emergency care settings, which can be based in, or out of hospital settings, and closely follow examples offered by the College of Paramedics in their [curriculum guidance](#) (2019). You are regularly in placement with SWASfT and although this reflects the professional direction

of your career development it also allows you to be regularly in touch with your PEd. The programme team and its committee have also considered additional placement visits that they believe would offer a valuable learning opportunity and have integrated these into the programme.


The acute placement allocation is a selection of areas which you choose in order of preference, we endeavour to achieve all first requests. Further information will be given during your first year, when you will make your choices in May 2024.

The learner is responsible for checking their POPPI account, and for keeping their personal details updated. [POPPI](#) is an online placements organiser, you will be given a demonstration on how to use this system, although there is more information on POPPI / POW in the acute placement section at the end of this handbook.

Named Practice Educator (PEd)

Your named practice educator will be a suitably prepared experienced paramedic who is responsible for guiding, supporting, supervising and formatively assessing you in clinical practice. Practice educators are required to have post-qualifying experience of at least one year and have completed or are working towards an approved module or programme of study in learning and assessing (or its equivalent). They must be aware of the aims, content and structure, and assessment strategy of the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science programme. This is achieved by a dedicated [Practice Educator DLE site](#), and on the SWASfT intranet site which contains all the relevant paperwork and information needed. There is additional support you may make use of from the dedicated university paramedic placement team, paramedicplacements@plymouth.ac.uk they are; Anna Harvey and Michelle Leeson. Personal tutors are also available to support practice educators, with regular contact regarding learner academic and practice performance.

Your PEd will likely work within a team of paramedics / PEd to ensure that your practice is well supported and fairly assessed. Importantly PEds will have been made aware of




your placement learning outcomes, the assessment process and general programme requirements. Together with your practice educator, you should be creating a learning contract for each placement block to ensure you are able to work towards gaining the appropriate skills and knowledge for your development.

Whilst you are a learner of this programme and working towards gaining sufficient knowledge and experience to complete the programme you will be supernumerary when in the placement setting. Supernumerary means that whilst you are a learner you will be working under the supervision of a health care professional at all times. Even as you gain more competence and experience, you will not work outside your level / stage of responsibility.

The placement, practice educators and programme team are aware of this requirement and there should be no occasion where you as a learner should be considered otherwise.

Mechanisms are in place for you to report any untoward situation or event. One of the first steps is to report this to your personal tutor, programme lead, practice educator or to the healthcare professional, with whom you are working. Please see the section Reporting Concerns in Practice (3.1) or you can also visit the following link to see the procedure which is; [reporting concerns in practice](#).

Your practice educator and team (other paramedics) will work with you and will review your clinical development progression and your portfolio to provide formative learning outcomes, based upon the summative learning outcomes which will be signed by your personal tutor at the end of each academic year. There are also three formative review points throughout each academic year, this is in place to enable you to review your development and harness key learning points. Your allocated practice educator, in consultation with the placement coordinator and paramedic placement team, will aim to rotate your clinical placement with other practice educators and paramedics, this can't be initiated by yourself, this is



managed by ROC with a view to creating a more holistic experience and more stimulated experience working with a variety of clinicians.

In the event of your practice educator needing to be changed for reasons such as; long term sickness or promotion, you will remain in practice with another paramedic until another named practice educator is allocated. It must be highlighted that this may not be in the same station, the allocation criteria above would be used.

It is imperative that you meet and communicate with your practice educator frequently so that your progress can be monitored. Whilst not with your practice educator, you will work with other healthcare professionals who will be able to witness the developments within your practice. Please use this time to support your development and seek evidence for your practice portfolio.

Practice Portfolio (PEBBLEPAD)

Your portfolio is a working document that you should commence work on from the start of each academic year. Work should not be left to gather at the end of the year, shifts with different paramedics and your acute experiences should be viewed as opportunities to build witness statements, and or evidence from others.

The practice component of the programme, does not contribute towards a module mark, normally a minimum of 485 hours will need to be evidenced within your portfolio alongside completion of your electronic timesheets. In addition to practice hours, the other weighted summative element is completion of all assessed summative learning outcomes and evidence submitted within your portfolio. You need to achieve all elements of the portfolio/practice module to continue into the next academic year, or apply for registration as a Paramedic with the HCPC. If the summative assessment is deemed a REFER by your personal tutor, you may be provided an opportunity to undertake one further placement attempt.

Learners must complete and achieve placement before progression is permitted. This may require learners to undertake a repeat of placement in the next academic year.

- Maximum allowed (if extenuating circumstances are not valid) is repeat of one placement per year
- Learners are required to pass each stage of practice education before moving on to the next academic stage, there is no opportunity to trail practice into a next year. Where a learner has failed the placement year they are permitted one further opportunity to repeat the full placement year, this will normally be in a repeat year

MODULE ASSESSMENTS

Formative Assessment

The aim of formative assessments is to promote learning and develop your ability and competency in settings and under conditions which you can practice and think creatively – taking time to learn the skill thoroughly with the support of your practice placement educator. The ultimate aim of formative assessment is to provide you with feedback on your current competency and development level and to highlight any progression – there are three formative checkpoints in each academic year, please refer to your Practice Education Portfolio module handbook ([PARA404](#), [PARA504](#), [PARA604](#)) for these dates. Using the online Practice Educator Formative Feedback template, this will enable you as learners to;

- Maximise learning by supporting learning in practice and theory
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Inform the learners how they are progressing
- Inform whether competence has been achieved or further practice is needed
- Provide general guidance and direction
- Allow for individual development

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment of the practice component will require robust evidence throughout your PebblePad. The module teaching team for which you are associated during the year of study, will assess your formative feedback alongside the evidence you have included throughout your Pebblepad to see how you have demonstrated you have met the summative learning outcomes.

- It is your responsibility, to share your Pebblepad with your practice educator, do not expect them complete and sign evidence from months previous, this is a work in progress.
- You are expected to share your Pebblepad portfolio with your practice educator at the beginning of your placement, and each placement block thereafter, so that they can familiarise themselves with your level of competence and achievements to date. This will enable *you and your* practice educator to formulate a written learning contract to target specific objectives within that placement area.

If your Practice Educator has any problems logging on, or requires any one of the module team to visit – please make the module lead or placement team paramedicplacements@plymouth.ac.uk aware.

SHIFTS ON PLACEMENT

During the designated practice blocks, you will follow all the shifts your practice educator works, these are not negotiable. As health care professionals provide management and care to patients over a 24/7 period, it is important to the programme and future employers that you also experience a full range of shifts patterns. ALL learners are required to experience the same types of shift patterns

which must include weekends and night duty as well as weekday working. However, working excessive hours in any one given week must not be breached.

SWASFTs criteria is as follows...

- Hours will be averaged to 37.5/week over the placement block
- A maximum of 60 hours per week, including overtime.
- No more than 5 x 12hrs day/late placement shifts in 1 week
- No more than 4 consecutive night shifts longer than 8 hours in 1 week
- Students get variations (heavy or light weekly hours allocations) due to the rota their PE is following

If you feel you are working too many shifts in a week, or have special circumstances, please contact your personal tutor.

NB – Please note, ROC count a week period as Sunday – Sunday.

During designated annual leave as indicated on the programme timetable, you will not be allowed to engage in practice. This is the only time you will not follow the shift pattern your practice educator works. In addition to this, should you need to request an authorised absence due to personal circumstances, this has to be agreed with your personal tutor or programme lead. Your practice educator's shifts will be on the SWASFT intranet, specifically linked to the Global Rostering System (GRS). You can download the mobile app to your smart device, you will also be rostered via GRS.

All Practice Educators undertake a period of relief during their shift pattern, this will be most likely at other stations, you are expected to travel to these stations also, this allows you greater experience of frontline services, especially if this involves using different acute hospital trusts.

The placement week begins on a Monday and ends on a Sunday evening (including a Sunday night shift). For example, you cannot commence placement on a Saturday or Sunday following the end of theory weeks as the Timesheet Management System (TMS) will not be able to record these shifts, as it is set up on the system as theory.

Attendance in Placement

It is an expectation of the University of Plymouth, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and a programme requirement, that you attend your practice placement as detailed on GRS. Confirmation of your attendance during placements will be monitored by the completion and submission of electronic timesheets (TMS). These need to be submitted on a monthly/weekly basis and submitted within one working week of the month end.

PLEASE NOTE We strongly advise you to keep a copy (screenshot) of your submitted timesheet for verification purposes, and upload these to the dedicated area within your PebblePad.

Late Submissions

All non-submissions will be followed up routinely by the programme team. Learners who are more than one timesheet submission in arrears may be removed from placement and referred under the [Fitness to Practice procedures](#).

Programme staff will monitor timesheet submission via [POPPI](#). This is an essential process as we need to maintain an audit of your placement hours to ensure that you are able to meet the programme practice hours. If for any reason, upon review of your timesheets and formative practice educator reports throughout the year, the Faculty of Health and programme team consider that you may not be able to reach the required hours, additional arrangements will be considered and where appropriate, arrangements negotiated with you and made by the programme team to allow these hours to be completed. The HCPC does request information from the University that each learner has met the required number of clinical practice hours as a component of the learners being eligible to apply for registration.

As a learner you are expected to:

- a) Keep accurate records or hours worked/attended
- b) Be effective in time management

- c) Respond efficiently and effectively to requests from colleagues
- d) “You should make sure that all attendance, achievement and assessment records are completed accurately and truthfully. (HCPC, 2016)

Example: If your mentor is working and you do not attend the shift, this is an Unauthorised Absence not a Day Off.

If sufficient programme hours are not demonstrated through learner daily activity then this may reflect on your suitability to progress to completion on the programme or your eligibility to apply for HCPC registration. Placements hours will be periodically calculated in December, April and June by personal tutors. This is discussed at the programme award board to enable progression into the next academic year or graduate.

Please also note that if you have two months of outstanding timesheets then you may have clinical placements suspended and requested to attend a mandatory informal fitness to practice.

- Please refer to the [TMS help guides](#) for more detailed information on timesheet submission

LEARNER RESPONSIBILITIES

Your Responsibilities

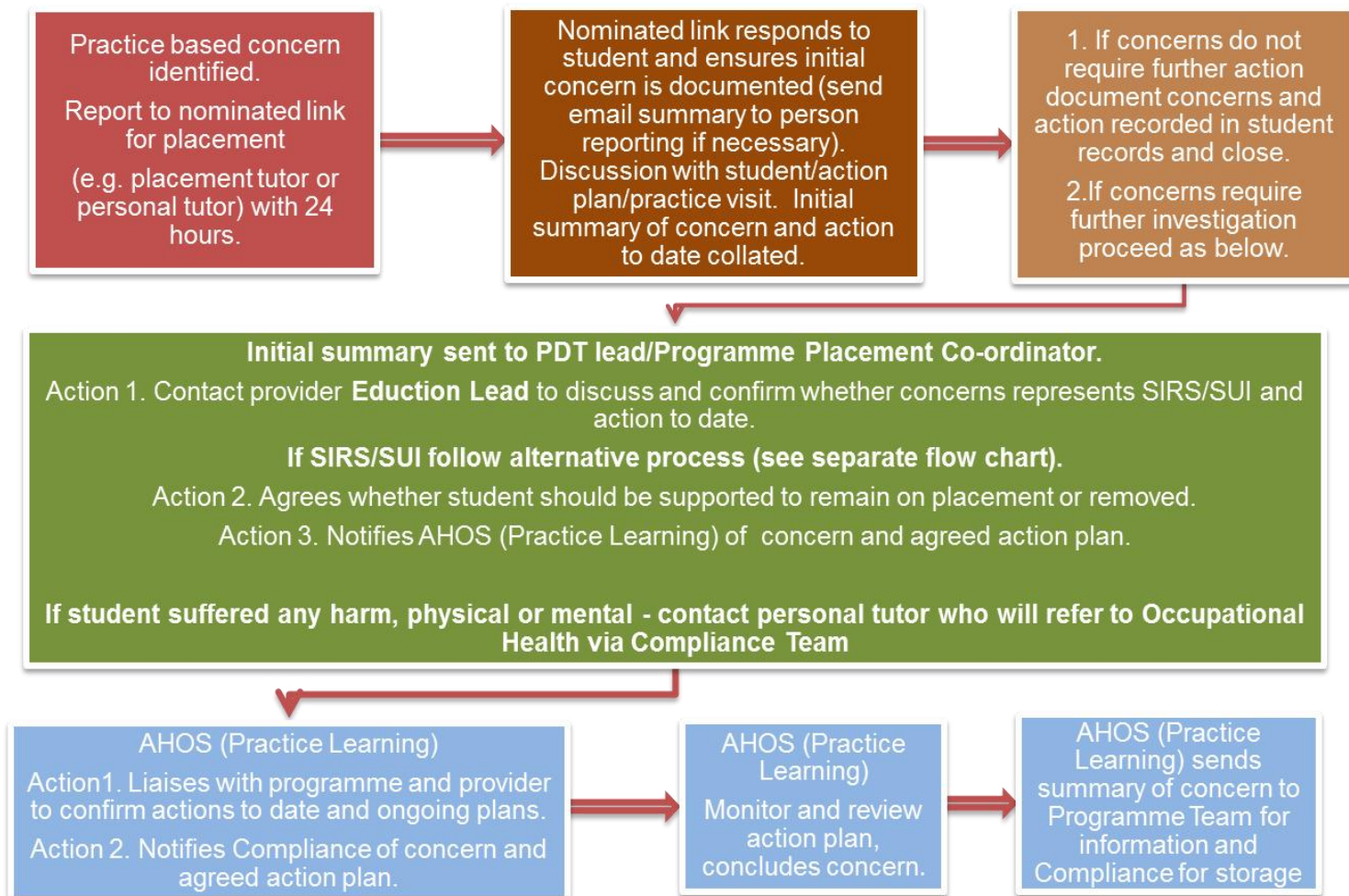
Learners are required to demonstrate that they are of 'good health and good character' before and during the programme as part of making sure that applicants and current learners will be able to practise safely and effectively within their profession.

- You need to be prepared for the practice placement, making sure you and your Practice Educator can log onto your Pebblepad.

- Be aware of the [Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure](#) set out by the University and ensure you are acting and working in accordance to this
- Be aware of your professional conduct and ensure you are working in accordance with the HCPC guidance on conduct and ethics for learners [Guidance on conduct and ethics for learners](#)
- Familiarise yourself with policy and comply with all rules and regulations laid down by the placement organisation in respect of health and safety.
- Not all placement providers are the same and it may be necessary for you to take responsibility for finding out about working practices of your placement provider, all information required is linked to [POPPI](#)
- Practice placement areas can be diverse and as such working practices can vary from area to area. It is your responsibility to identify and respond to different working practices.
- Keep up-to-date with your Pebblepad and other practice documentation, which will assist your Practice Educator in management of their role in supporting your learning in practice.
- Follow the appropriate policies and procedures regarding concerns for practice if these occur.

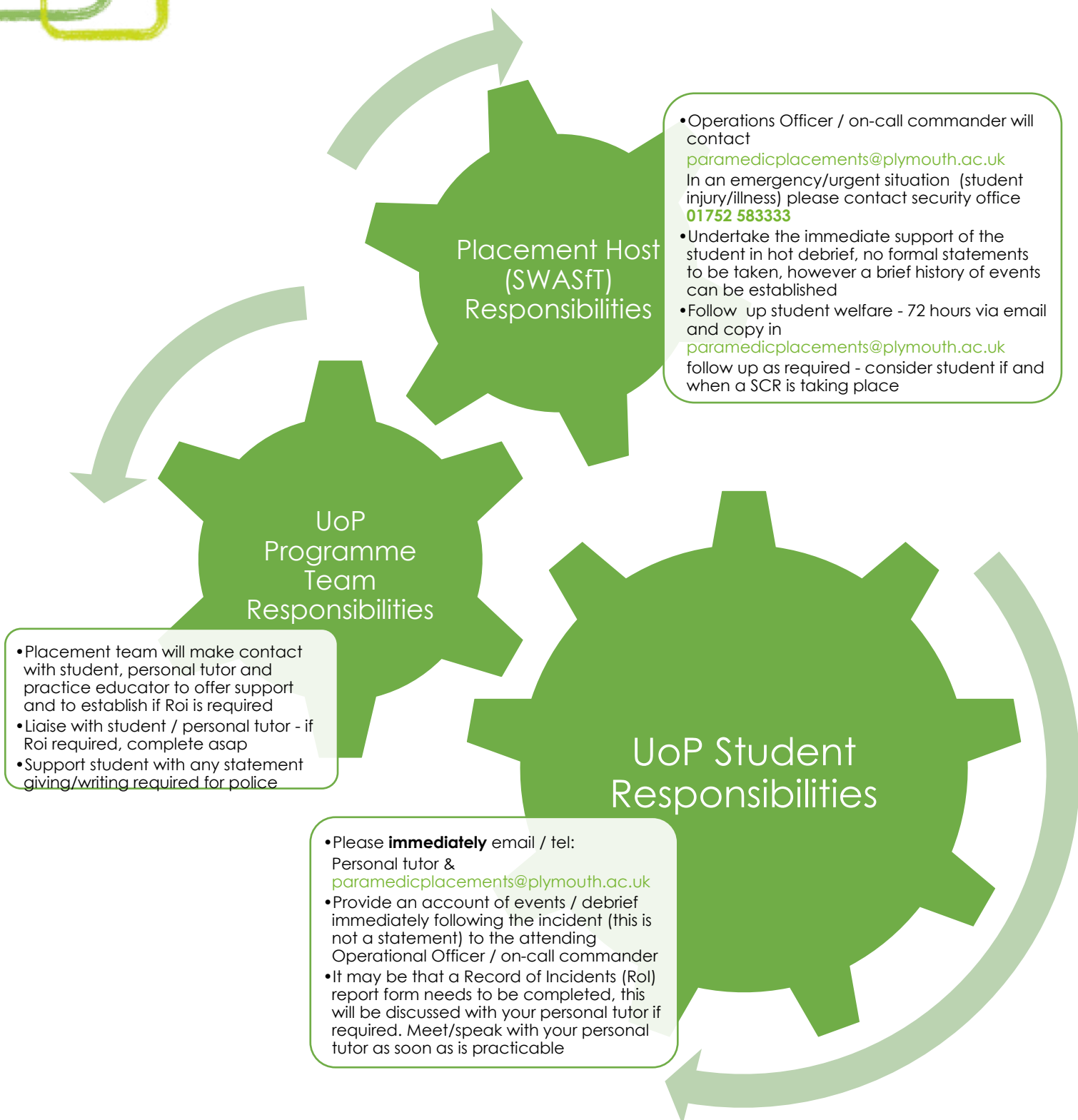
Raising Concerns in Practice

Raising concerns in practice is a responsibility of every aspiring health professional, please refer to the Placements and Incidents in Practice [Policy](#). It is vitally important that learners feel the need and urgency to report any incident in practice that they consider to be untoward, and are supported to do so. A culture must exist that encourages learners to recognise that any risks to patients and clients outweigh concerns about practice assessments and future job opportunities. Staff should remind learners that acting promptly on their concerns demonstrates excellent professional practice.



Critical Incidents in Practice

Following a critical incident in practice (paediatric cardiac arrest/traumatic arrest etc) please follow the guidance below on how to proceed. Inevitably SWASfT will undertake a 'hot' debrief and request a group fact finding statement, this is perfectly acceptable to give, this is not a police statement. However if you are called to give a formal statement you must inform your personal tutor as they will need to attend with you.



Placement Hours

The practice placement hours do not accrue over the three years and as such, you will need to achieve the normal minimum of **485** hours each year to graduate from the programme. This is because each year requires different competencies, assessed at a different level in order to be successful at each stage of the programme.

All learners on the programme will have a starting total of 0 hours for the following academic year and will need to achieve the minimum of **485** hours to be achieve the practice competencies enabling progression into the next academic year.

What does this mean for me?

- All learners in all three years will submit their portfolios at the end of the academic year, this submission date will be made known to you on day one of the module
- Learners who have submitted their portfolio will not return to practice following submission, unless they have extenuating circumstances in place, which allows them to do so to complete their portfolio over an extended period of time
- Any hours over 485 total per year may not be counted towards the next academic year/stage (however this is not a limiting factor for learners to have more than the recommended minimum, it is a flexible approach for some learners who require more time, within designated blocks)
- The minimum of 485 hours total must be met to achieve each stage of the programme unless there is extenuating circumstances, these will be considered individually at the award board.
- All practice hours should be submitted as per [TMS guidelines](#) failure to do so may affect your progression onto the next stage of the programme
- Summer break is for learners to rest and not be in practice, unless for extenuating reasons, therefore decreasing pressure for learners
- Please review the faculty policy, [Recording of Hours](#) for extra-curricular events and study days, a maximum of 37.5 hours per year, will be given over to simulation and conferences

- There may be opportunity for you to complete CPPD and clinical skills simulation with your tutors during summer break
- Registering as a Paramedic with the HCPC will be discussed early on during year three for learners to maximise their opportunity for registration

Holiday Working, Additional Shifts and Simulation

Unless you have extenuating circumstances, you cannot remain in practice over the summer. There should be no learners in practice beyond the end of the academic year. If there is a deficit of hours then you should have made your personal tutor aware and a plan will have to be made.

The summer break is a busy time for Trust staff, this window of opportunity is used for other learners, but importantly it gives the staff consolidatory time before September. Please be mindful if you need to do additional shifts speak with your tutor or placement team to arrange, and if you do not have authorisation then you should not be in practice, this applies to those students holding Bank ECA contracts with the trust also – importantly, you all need a break too.

Holiday - Learners CANNOT attend placement anytime during the Christmas, New Year and Easter breaks.

Requests for authorised absence

You all will have signed a placement contract prior to being allowed on the programme. This contract details your commitments to the placement element of the course and will be referred to when students request exceptional circumstances or special consideration.

For clarity at this stage, situations such as Childcare, transport or accommodation and birthdays/family events such as holidays will not be considered as exceptional circumstances for authorisation as you are expected to organise these independently around your placement commitments.

Absence from Clinical Placement or Taught Modules through Sickness or Change in Personal Circumstances

The Faculty of Health has a policy for managing both negotiated and unforeseen learner absences from the programme due to certified or uncertified sickness or change in personal circumstance. This is to ensure compliance with the attendance requirements of the Health and Care Professions Council and the need to demonstrate responsible financial management of public funds.

- Please refer to the Policy and Guidelines for more detailed information regarding authorised absence and [extenuating-circumstances](#)
- Please inform your personal tutor via their email
- Please inform paramedicplacements@plymouth.ac.uk
- Please inform your Practice Educator via their work email address as soon as practicable

Any absence MUST in the first instance be reported to the SWAST sickness line.

Tel: 03000 331331 (option 1)

(One call to report sick and then another to report fit)



You must also inform programme administration on EACH day of absence.

Tel: 01752 588800



Absences from practice will only be authorised for illness and or similar circumstances, absence will not be authorised for activities such as an assessment deadline or holiday, it is expected that as an independent learner, you will plan your time effectively.

Daily Rest Periods and Bank Contracts



You should have a planned daily rest period of not less than 11 continuous hours in each 24 hour period. It is recognised that due to the nature of pre-hospital care a shift may exceed 13 hours (i.e. the daily rest period may be less than 11 hours); however, this should not be considered normal practice when arranging shifts/placements. For further information please refer to the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, Working Hours Policy.

Some learners may hold bank contracts with SWASfT, other NHS trusts, or have paid employment elsewhere. It is essential that during a placement block you do not undertake more than 48 hours work in any one working week (Monday – Sunday). This total includes both placement shifts and any paid employment. This only exception to this is where you are following your placement rota pattern, as allocated by ROC on GRS. This is both for the safety of service users and yourself.

Please note the following points:

- You must give priority to allocated placement shifts over paid employment.
- Bank shift hours do not contribute to placement hours.
- Bank shift hours will be periodically monitored alongside placement hours to ensure adherence to this guidance.

Failing to adhere to this guidance will instigate the Fitness to Practice process.

Personal Tutorials, Tripartite and Programme Academic Support in Clinical Practice

The aim of a tutorial is to provide pastoral and academic support and to promote the development of key skills so that you are empowered to take control of your own learning. The support could be on an individual basis or in groups. Module teachers provide academic support for each module. Shortly after enrolment to the programme, a named personal tutor is allocated to you. In addition, there are cohort leaders, this is a member of the programme team who acts as a link between

the programme leader and the cohort. Throughout the year you will also meet with the cohort lead whether in a group or individually.

Learners are expected to make contact with their personal tutor on a reasonably regular basis, giving due notice when requesting tutorials. This is especially important as the time approaches for references to be written.

Tripartite tutorials are another mechanism whereby academic staff may meet with the Practice Educator and learner. A tripartite meeting offers an opportunity for the learner and Practice Educator to say what learner progress is being made. It considers such things as professional behaviour, motivation, clinical development and portfolio development. Due to geographical challenges, tripartite tutorials are not routinely required but are available on request. Telephone and Skype tutorials are a useful option.

If there are any challenges in clinical practice or a requirement for pastoral support, normally, your Practice Educator can assist you. The practice placement coordinator for the programme spends a significant number of days visiting learners and practice educators to offer day to day support ([Appendix 2](#)), this is your opportunity to highlight early concerns.

However, on occasion this is not so straight forward and it is quite acceptable and sometimes necessary to contact your personal tutor. This is especially the case when a Serious Untoward Incident occurs or at such times when the patient episode has been quite traumatic for the learner. The School has a range of processes to follow to ensure that learners are appropriately supported and incidents investigated/ managed appropriately. The initial process for managing the majority of concerns is summarised in the raising concerns in practical section above, but please see [POPPI](#) for further details.

Supporting Learners in Practice

The support for the learner on practice placement as well as the Practice Educator is essential to the successful development of the learners in our School. [The National Standard Contract](#) (2017) as well as the [Standards of Education and Training](#) outlined by the Health and Care Professions Council (2017) requires appropriate support mechanisms to be in place for both.

Overarching support for placements is provided by the Associate Head of School (practice learning) alongside the placement co-ordinator for each programme. A member of your programme team will provide a link to access the information required for each placement location. The contact name for your placement link for each placement will be published prior to your placement. You will be able to contact this member of staff by phone or e-mail, this information is accessed via your POPPI log-in to [Placements on the Web](#).

For students in immediate crisis, please contact:

<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/students-and-family/support-in-times-of-crisis>

It is also the responsibility of you, the learner and your Practice Educator to inform the programme team of a change of circumstances, such as, long term absence of your Practice Educator, if you have a change of address and your commute is untenable. Please inform paramedicplacements@plymouth.ac.uk with any change in circumstance or potential need for support you need to discuss. The team are also always keen to hear feedback and how we can improve, please;

- Discuss any aspects of your placement, positive as well as negative aspects of the learning experience. The issues discussed may relate to travel and accommodation, clinical practice or may be of a pastoral nature. The aim is to optimise individual learners' use of the placement learning environment by helping them to identify their learning needs and ways of meeting their learning outcomes.

As a team we endeavour to:

- Provide your Practice Educator with the educational information that is required during the placement
- Enable the Practice Educator to discuss learner progress and to give guidance on the assessment of the learner performance
- Create an appropriate link between the practice placement unit and the university base
- Provide feedback to the practice placement area (sharing good practice)

Uniform

All new starters are issued their uniform through the University of Plymouth, this process usually starts during induction week. All uniform should be received prior to placement starting the following January. Uniform that needs changing or that has become damaged needs to be returned to University programme admin. Additional uniform can be ordered through administration as necessary. You will sign for receipt of your uniform and PPE, which should be returned to Programme Administration on graduation or if you interrupt/withdraw.

Withdrawing and Interrupting from the Programme

If you are considering withdrawing from the University or interrupting your studies for any reason, please consult your programme lead and seek advice if you are experiencing difficulties. Just talking to someone may be enough to put you back on track. Learners choose to interrupt study or withdraw for a variety of reasons and we may be able to help.

If you decide that you don't want to continue with your studies in this academic year, it is important that you correctly withdraw or interrupt study as there are academic and financial implications that you need to consider. For international learners there will also be implications with regard to your visa.

You must complete the withdrawal or interrupt study form and take the form in person to your Faculty Office, however we strongly advise you consult with the programme leader before completion of the form.

Returning to Practice following a period of Interruption or Absence

There are many reasons why some learners need to interrupt their studies, financial, personal or in fact, for any reason relevant to that learner. Following a period of interruption you re-join a cohort usually the following academic year in September, this can be different for some learners. As you can imagine, during your time of absence, the Practice Educator you had been working with will be either supporting other learners in practice or taking a break from their practice educator role. In most cases it is necessary to place you on a different station, still utilising the allocations process above. Each learner will be reviewed individually, a handover record from your previous Practice Educator will be shared with the new educator, it is advised you keep in touch with your personal tutor during the time of transition and to make them or the placement team aware of any concerns arising, if there is any during this time.

Fitness to Practice Procedure for Student Paramedic Learners

Higher Education institutions have a responsibility to ensure that health and social care learners are fit to practice and adhere to regulatory advice provided by the HCPC. Learner handbooks and the professional body websites provide information about the standards of behaviour expected of learners training to be a paramedic. It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the provisions and requirements of the HCPC. A copy of the full [Fitness to Practice](#) procedure is available to all learners on DLE.

Many learners will undergo an informal Fitness to Practice meeting during their time on the programme, there are many reasons why this may happen, such as; Occupational Health referral or personal circumstances – it is not always because

there has been a concern raised or problem occurred. Be mindful that this process is a supportive one, as it allows the team to discuss openly any concerns you may have or that have arisen in practice, address them, formulate an action plan and support you to remain or return to practice.



South Western Ambulance Service **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

As part of the Fitness to Practice procedure, SWASfT is informed by the University of any Fitness to Practise hearings, which relate to the FTP occurring whilst on Trust property. This will be made known whether informal or formal.

The Trust reserves the right to investigate each case on an individual basis, regardless of the university FtP hearing outcome and has the right to refuse further practice placement opportunities. This would be in accordance with SWASfT's own policies and procedures which you are bound by as an honorary contract holder. Depending on the outcome, it is possible that the trust may decline to provide further placement opportunities, which could affect your ability to achieve the outcomes of the programme.

Support from the Students Union

The Advice Centre is able to provide support and representation to all Plymouth University Students facing the Fitness to Practise Process. They are part of the Students' Union, of which all learners are all automatically members, and like other Unions we are independent from the University, providing learners with free, confidential and independent advice.

Learners can contact The Advice Centre at any stage in the FTP process, however, the earlier they are involved the easier it is to provide support. They can assist learners with any reflective statement they wish to submit to the University, along with attending the meetings. The FTP process can be daunting and having someone who is not a family member or a friend to talk it through with can be important.

The Advice Centre is based on the main Plymouth campus and we are open all year round, they regularly attend FTP meetings at Plymouth Allied Health Centre (PAHC) and they are also able to skype if you are attending an informal meeting at our Exeter or Truro campuses.

The Advice Centre's contact details are:

Tel: 01752 588373



Email: advice@su.plymouth.ac.uk



Website: www.upsu.com/advice



ACUTE PLACEMENT

Acute Placements

As paramedic learners you are expected to apply knowledge to practice. Through your acute placement experiences you will be learning new skills and consolidating others; these placements will provide you with a variety of experiences enabling you to become well rounded competent Sciences.

Learning in different settings of clinical practice will also help you to identify and experience the many challenges and situations faced by paramedics in relation to patient care. Remember that as paramedics, we need the expertise of other professionals to inform our own practice and to ensure continuity of care for our own patients.



There is a specific acute placement booklet on the DLE in the placement section. This is aimed at providing a clear and concise overview of the opportunities available during these placements. There may also be opportunities to experience different placements depending on capacity.

This needs to be completed accordingly and submitted through your PebblePad, detailed information can be found within this handbook.

Acute Placement Allocation (ARC)

ARC is an online placement management system that provides learners with online information about the placement to which they have been allocated. In addition a web based “one stop shop” known as POPPI, this has been developed to provide supporting information. Further information about ARC and a demonstration site can be found on the information sheet on the MOODLE programme page, go to [POPPI](#) Acute placement allocations will be populated on your account, there is now a facility to send text or email updates, however, it is your responsibility as an aspiring registered paramedic to check your Poppi account regularly and frequently. The placement team endeavour to provide 6 weeks' notice prior to allocation. It may be in some circumstances this is not achieved; an email will be sent to you informing you of the allocation by a member of the placement team. This is only in the event of the placement allocation being made with less than 6 weeks' notice.

If you have any queries relating to acute placements, you can contact the placement team or programme team here:

Email: paramedicplacements@plymouth.ac.uk



Email: michelle.lesson@plymouth.ac.uk



End of Placement Evaluation

At the end of the Placement period you will need to complete the end of placement report, see Appendix 1. This should be completed at the end of your acute placements and also your frontline ambulance placements (completed at the years end), this form is anonymous and information will be collated to provide feedback to improve placement experience. Please go to the [evaluation tool](#).

APPENDIX 1

Example Evaluation Form

Dear Learner

Thank you for completing this form. Evaluation of the practice learning environment is a valuable resource for the provider and develops your own professional practice. This evaluation will be available to the practice areas, Trusts and University upon completion.

If you want to discuss this in more detail please contact your Programme Team,

Personal Tutor or a member of the Practice Development Team in a timely manner. If your supernumerary status was not recognised/accepted (question 20) please contact your Programme Lead.

PLEASE NOTE - the phrase 'named support' is a general title used in this evaluation to cover the following terms - Practice Assessor, Buddy Practice Assessor, Mentor, Clinical Educator, Practice Placement Educator, Sign Off Mentor, Practice Teacher, FLA Mentor, Emergency Care Science.

Please answer each question. Once you have submitted the form you will be unable to change your responses. You may be contacted to discuss your feedback further.

Section 1: Preparation for placement

1. I was informed of my practice placement at least 4 weeks in advance

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

1. I obtained enough information (from any source) to prepare me for my placement

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

2. I received a local induction for my placement before or during my placement

| | | |
|-----|----|-------------------------|
| Yes | No | Previously attended one |
|-----|----|-------------------------|

Comments (100 characters max)

3. I was informed of who my mentor / practice supervisor was before or on arrival in the clinical area

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

4. I met my mentor / practice supervisor or another designated person in the first week of the placement

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

5. I am aware of what to do if I have witnessed unacceptable practice

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

6. I was aware of who to contact at the University should there be a problem whilst I was in placement

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

7. I was aware of who to contact in the practice area / placement provider had there been a problem whilst I was in the clinical area

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

Section 2: Whilst on placement

Care and Compassion

9. I felt the placement provided a high standard of patient care

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Comments (100 characters max) | | | |

Team Working (including communication)

10. I felt the clinical team worked well as a team

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Comments (100 characters max) | | | |

Pride and Achievement

11. I felt the clinical team had a sense of pride in their work

| | | | |
|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|

Comments (100 characters max)

Respect and Dignity

12. I felt the team treated the patients with dignity and respect

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Comments (100 characters max) | | | |

13. I felt all members of the team (including learners) were treated with dignity and respect

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Comments (100 characters max) | | | |

Innovation

14. I felt the team were open to ideas and suggestions that may improve the service they provide

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Comments (100 characters max) | | | |

15. My mentor / practice supervisor was familiar with my module / assessment documentation and overall programme

| Yes | No |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

16. I felt enabled to make the most of learning opportunities

| Fully | Frequently | Sometimes | Never |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|-------|
| Comments (100 characters max) | | | |

17. Opportunities were made for me to meet with my mentor / practice supervisor at the start of the placement to consider my learning outcomes

| Yes | No |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

18. Opportunities were made for me to meet with my mentor / practice supervisor at the mid-point to review my progress

| Yes | No |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

19. Opportunities were made for me to meet with my mentor / practice supervisor at the summative or end point of the placement

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

Section 3: At the end of the placement

20. My supernumerary status was upheld

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

Nursing and Midwifery learners ONLY

21. Were you supervised directly or in-directly for at least 40% (15 hours per week) of the time in practice by your named mentor

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

22. Overall I have felt well supported in this placement

| | | | |
|------------|--------------|------------|-------|
| Yes, fully | Yes, in part | Not always | Never |
|------------|--------------|------------|-------|

23. The placement enabled me to achieve my assessed learning outcomes



| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

24. I would be happy if my friends or family were cared for in this placement

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Comments (100 characters max) | | | |

25. Would you recommend this placement to another learner

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Comments (100 characters max) | | | |

26. Overall this placement was a good learning experience

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Yes | No |
| Comments (100 characters max) | |

27. Any further comments that you wish to say about your placement

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Comments (400 characters max) |
|-------------------------------|

APPENDIX 2

Example Progress Report Form



**UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH**
Faculty of Health

**SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS PROGRESS REPORT FORM
VISIT FOR PARAMEDIC STUDENTS ON PRACTICE IN ACUTE OR FLA**



| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Progress check carried out by: | Module Name: |
| Date (DD/MM/YYYY): | Placement Location and Setting: |
| Student Name: | Ambulance station: |
| | Name of Clinical Educator(s): |

DISCUSSION – should include the following areas

Tick

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>The Environment</p> <p>The student has been made welcome in the placement and feels integrated as part of the team</p> | |
| <p>The Acute Placement Booklet and Practice Portfolio</p> <p>The student has brought and shared the correct documentation with their mentor</p> | |
| <p>Feedback and Assessment</p> <p>The student is receiving feedback;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of learning contract – frequently reviewed • Evidence of completion of PebblePad | |
| <p>Reflective Practice/ Case Study/ Presentation</p> <p>The student is engaging in reflection and learning activities. This may include preparing a case study through reflection / assignment for specific modules.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Airway placement; one reflection has to be based on this allocation</p> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Pastoral Issues</p> <p>Are there any external issues which may impact on the student's wellbeing and/or performance during this placement?</p> | |
| <p>Preparation</p> <p>The student was able to prepare adequately for the placement</p> | |
| <p>Learning Needs</p> <p>If the student has any particular learning needs, are these being adequately addressed?</p> | |
| <p>Professional Issues</p> <p>Upholding professional behaviours and attitudes, in accordance with the Standards of Conduct (HCPC, 2016)</p> | |
| <p>The Acute Placement Booklet and Practice Portfolio</p> <p>The student has shared the correct paperwork with their mentor</p> | |
| <p>Placement Organisation (both Acute & FLA)</p> <p>There are appropriate opportunities within the placement to enable the student to demonstrate achievement of the Intended learning outcomes and competencies appropriate to this level</p> | |
| <p>Assessment documentation</p> <p>The mentor / NPM understands their role in completing the standards of proficiency Portfolio/ timesheets</p> | |

Other Issues

Are there any other issues that need to be discussed?

Signature(s) Programme Link..... Student
Educator.....



APPENDIX 3

Risk Assessment

Standard framework for managing the diversity of placements and the potential risks associated with them:

This flowchart outlines the minimum requirements that the university expects academics, students and placement providers to meet. Rather than stipulating subject specific practices it aims to provide a set of broad principles that should underpin current practice across the School of Health Professions

