

Scottish Cluster Dietetic Placements



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www.rgu.ac.uk/dietetic-placements-scotland

Approval and Monitoring Processes for Dietetic Placements in Scotland.

In recent years there has been a significant review of dietetic practice placement delivery in Scotland which resulted in the launch of Scottish wide learning outcomes and core portfolios including revised assessment tools for all dietetic students in Scotland. As a result the approval and monitoring process for dietetic placements has also been reviewed.

Approval and monitoring of dietetic practice placements continues to be co-ordinated at a national level with all placements being approved for utilisation by students at each of the three universities in Scotland which deliver dietetic education (GCU, QMU and RGU). The process for approval is based upon the NES Quality Standards for Practice Placement (QSPP) Audit Tool: http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/325397/qspp_audit_tool_interactive_fields.pdf. This audit tool includes information and feedback from practice educators, students and service users.

Although the approval and monitoring of practice placements is coordinated at a national level, each Practice Placement Provider has an identified link HEI who supports practice educators in the delivery of practice placements.

The approval and monitoring process is outlined below:

Approval of Practice Placements

1. Where a Practice Placement Provider has not been approved to deliver dietetic practice placements:

The Health Board Area should in the first instance contact their link university to discuss how they can best deliver practice based education. Discussions should include issues such as placement types, number of students, training requirements for practice educators etc.

Following the initial discussions the Practice Educator should complete the NES QPPS audit tool and submit this to the lead for approval and monitoring of practice placements in Scotland (Jacklyn Jones: jjones@qmu.ac.uk). In addition to the audit tool an example placement programme should also be submitted. Submission of additional paperwork e.g. portfolios and

assessment tools is not required as all practice educators in Scotland must utilise the core national paperwork which has been developed and adopted across Scotland.

An academic member of staff from one of the three universities in Scotland and an experienced practice educator (i.e. with a minimum of 3 years practice education experience) will be identified to undertake a half day visit to the Health Board Area. The aim of the visit will be to:

- Discuss the planned programme
- Address and discuss dietetic departmental training needs related to practice education.
- Ensure that student training programme is supported by the wider institution and management structure.
- Address any issues raised about the placement programme.

2. Where placements have previously been approved.

Every five years each practice placement provider will be required to complete and submit the NES QPPS audit tool. An identified academic from one of the three universities in Scotland who deliver dietetic education will be identified to review the completed QPPS audit tool.

The aim of the documentation review will be to:-

- Address departmental training needs related to practice education, for the placement.
- Address any issues raised about the placement programme.
- Complete a report and provide a copy to the practice placement provider

Where issues are identified as potential problems in practice based education and which impact on the student experience these will be highlighted to the lead practice educator. The link university and practice educators will work collaboratively to seek a resolution. To this end practice educators are encouraged to invite a representative from their link HEI to attend practice education/student training meetings on at least an annual basis to ensure a collaborative approach to practice based education.

Monitoring of Practice Placements

All practice placements in Scotland will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis via the existing practice placement supply and demand process and requires practice educators to confirm either:

- no changes have been made to practice based delivery in the health board area or
- to report the changes which have been made.

This data is collated at a national level and reviewed by the lead for approval and monitoring in Scotland. Any major change to practice placement delivery e.g. change to lead trainer, change in type of placement being delivered etc. will be reported to the link university who will discuss the changes with the lead practice educator. Where the change is deemed to be substantial and which could significantly impact on the student experience practice educators will be required to complete the NES QPPS audit tool and to follow the process for when placements have previously been approved (see point 2 above)

In addition to the completion of the monitoring process by practice educators, students are also required to complete a placement evaluation at the end of each placement block. These evaluations are collated at a national level and each link university is responsible reviewing the evaluations for their identified Practice Placement Provider. Where persistent issues are raised by students the link university is responsible for raising these with the lead practice educators. The link university and Practice Placement Providers will work collaboratively to seek a resolution to the issue.