

PRE-REGISTRATION NURSING

PRACTICE HOURS: CRITERIA, SIGN OFF AND DEFICIT POLICY



1. Key Principles

- 1.1 The **minimum 2,300 hours of NMC mandatory practice learning** is built into the programme and placement blocks over the full three years. Students are not encouraged to undertake additional practice hours in any one allocated placement unless it is beneficial to their learning or necessary to make up hours due to sickness.
- 1.2 Excess hours undertaken in one placement are not permitted to be banked to cut short the next, to take unscheduled holiday, for example, or to carry over to the next year. It is an expectation that all allocated hours for each placement are undertaken. This must be through a variety of experiences and escalation of competence level in order to gain transferable skills over the three years of the programme.
- 1.3 **Practice hours cannot be undertaken within theory allocated time.** The **minimum 2,300 hours of NMC mandatory theory** is built into the programme and timetabled over the full three years. This includes reading weeks for self-directed learning which are included in the required 2,300 theory hours timetabled.
- 1.4 Where extenuating circumstances such as episodes of ill health, planned surgery or treatment occur, the personal tutor and student will develop and monitor an action plan to negotiate and make up missed hours. **Extensions must be applied for by the Practice Assessment Document 1pm submission deadline at the latest.**
- 1.5 **An extenuating circumstances** appeal can be applied for where significant deficit of over 37.5 hours or more exists, see below. A link to extenuating circumstances process and forms for submission can be found at the end of this document and on Blackboard.

2. Criteria

2.1 Practice hours are defined as:

- Hours completed in scheduled placement blocks in line with the University guidelines, EU working directive and associated Trust/organisation working hours policies
- Simulated practice in the skills labs/classrooms
- Teaching or demonstrating practice related competence
- Practice related meetings or conferences
- Making up hours in practice

2.2 Not defined as practice hours:

- Induction to paid employment in any sector including the NHS
- Job interviews or training
- Recruitment and selection days and open days
- LIVES training
- Conference with agenda not specific to practice or patient care competences
- Subject Committee or student union representation- awarded theory hours

2.3 Any practice related activity linked to patient care will be considered as an activity for which practice hours can be allocated where it does not coincide with theory hours. This includes Inter Professional Education (IPE) activities/events (1 day event will carry 10 hours, half day event will carry 5 and a half hours). **This must be organised and agreed with the placement provider and academic team prior to attendance.**

2.4 All students who attend any conference or education event will complete a **proforma which will require students to demonstrate the direct link to practice learning outcomes.** Once attended, students will be encouraged to reflect and possibly present to their peers. For example: **a conference such as the RCN cannot be linked to direct patient care where the focus is education;** A conference around tissue viability or diabetes, mental health or learning disability, or wound management for example, is directly focussed on patient care.

3. Practice Hours' Deficit

3.1 All students must work towards a zero deficit of practice hours within each academic year. That is, any absence must be made up (as soon as possible), ideally in the placement where the student has been absent or a previous long placement subject to negotiation with the placement and Personal Tutor.

3.2.1 Where there is a deficit of hours the following guidance should be followed and applied:

- (i) Any deficit must be reported to uolpractice.support@lincoln.ac.uk and managed throughout each year via **an agreed extension and action plan with negotiated additional hours, developed and monitored** by the personal tutor and student and review of achievability, sustainability and student wellbeing.
- (ii) EU Directive guidelines **currently indicate up to 48 hours per week averaged** over a 17-week period, ultimately up to 60 hours per week. You can work more than 48 hours one week, as long as the average over 17 weeks is less than 48 hours a week.
- (iii) Your working hours can't be averaged out if you're under 18. You can't work more than 40 hours in any one week.
- (iv) **There is no buffer of additional hours**, all hours allocated for each placement must be achieved and cannot be carried over in to the next year. This is, in part, due to escalation of skills and competence levels within each successive placement.
- (v) Students with **less than 37.5 hours owing are expected to make up the time** before the next progression point. This is reasonably achieved over 5 days of 7.5 hours or 3 long shifts for example.
- (vi) **Students may undertake practice learning of up to 200 hours during public health placements** (current allocation is 150 hours) where competence is achieved at the required level within summative assessed placements where attendance was of at least 150 hours. If **competence**

levels are not achieved, an additional summative placement will need to be arranged in negotiation with placement providers and the academic team.

- (vii) An approved mentor who has entered their details and signature on the “authorised signatory record” within your documentation, must **sign off hours’ achieved and record absence**.
- (viii) Students who are also employed as health care support workers **must prioritise** placement hours over additional shifts as paid employees.
- (ix) The NMC requires students to have had a range of placements which, where possible will be over the 24 hour/7 days per week period in order to experience a full cycle of care delivery, understand the needs and experience of patients required to stay in overnight and to also work closely with their mentor if they have this shift pattern.
- (x) We would not expect a student undertaking several nights in a row without a clear learning and development plan within their assessment documentation. It must be coordinated and the student must continue to spend 40% of their practice time with their mentor, fulfilling, on average 37.5 hours per week.