

## Dietetic Practice Placements: An Overview

The practice placement component of the BSc. (Hons) Dietetics course at Coventry University has been developed in line with the BDA (2013) Curriculum Framework for the Pre-registration Education & Training of Dietitians, the HCPC (2013) Standards of Proficiency for Dietitians and the HCPC Standards of Education and Training (2009). In response to key developments in contemporary healthcare provision, the placement A, B and C learning outcomes have been developed from those originally set out in the 'Pre-registration Education and Training of Dietitian' manual (CPSM 2000).

Practice education is teaching and learning that takes place within the practice (clinical) setting (e.g. in hospitals, health centres, community settings, nursing/care homes etc.).

The placement component must ensure that a minimum of 28 weeks of full-time work (minus an average of 2 hour of private study time per week), equivalent to a total of 1000 hours, is spent in supervised clinical education.

The 28 weeks of full-time work are undertaken in three distinct placement periods.

- **Placement A** (module 115DT): a **2-week** period of practice education normally at the beginning of Year 2, which provides work experience and orientation to the NHS alongside the opportunity to develop communication skills.  
Students are provided with a Placement A Workbook and a Reflective Diary to support completion of the placement learning outcomes and associated tasks. A named university 'visiting tutor' is identified and s/he will, if needed, be available to provide advice / support during the placement.
- **Placement B** (module 311DT): a **14-week** period of practice education normally in Year 3, which provides an opportunity to develop dietetic knowledge and practice skills with 'core' service user groups (as individuals and in group settings). A tutor will visit the student in the placement setting, usually in weeks 7 and 11, to provide support.
- **Placement C** (module 312DT): a **12-week** period of practice education normally in Year 4, which extends the student's dietetic knowledge and practice skills with more complex service users / groups. The placement enables further development of skills such as reflection, clinical reasoning, time management and professional autonomy to enable safe practice in a variety of different contexts and with a wide range of client groups. The placement culminates with the student managing their own caseload (whilst still under supervision). The objective at the end of the C placement is to have a student dietitian who is competent to practice as an entry-level (band 5) dietitian.  
A tutor will visit the student in the placement setting, usually in weeks 4 and 8, to provide support.

**To ensure maximum utilisation of practice placements in the West Midlands flexibility of placement timing may be required. This may mean some overlap with summer months at certain times.**