QUALITY ASSURANCE

The course monitoring procedures and course evaluation provide a mechanism to inform quality assurance of the course including the clinical provision for all stakeholders.

Criteria for Selection / Establishing Placements

Initial identification of placements is determined by the Placement Co-ordinator or a member of the practice team or academic staff. The learning opportunities are identified and where there is a local training need, support is offered. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation systems are in place.

Placement suitability will be assessed against the following minimum standards:

- The placement must offer cover for the students’ working week by an identified practice educator. Several practice educators may be involved and one must be available for supervision at all times.
- Hands-on experience must be available where students must be able to employ practice skill.
- Health and Safety guidance for the placements of HE students 1999
- The capacity to provide learning opportunities which ensure that the intended learning outcomes can be achieved, for example, depending on the availability of an appropriate service user group
- The capacity, capability and willingness of staff to participate in teaching and assessment, including maintenance of student cover in the case of staff absence
- A positive attitude towards continuing professional development in the Unit, e.g. an active in-service training programme
- Adequate resources to support learning, for example, access to equipment, Internet access, and library facilities etc.

Methods of Monitoring Placement Quality

Placement quality is monitored by both formal and informal mechanisms and these occur both in placement and in the university.

Direct observation of placements occurs on every placement, this monitoring goes hand in hand with the visiting tutor support of practice educators, to assist them in the provision of quality placements.

1. Formal placement evaluation processes

Formal written evaluation of dietetic practice placements is received from three perspectives; student, practice educator and visiting tutor. This takes place at the end of each placement and produces timely feedback to all parties.

- Student evaluation

  Post-placement debriefing workshops are organised and facilitated by the dietetic placement co-ordinator within a week or two of each student cohort returning to the university from their A, B and C placements.
During each placement-specific workshop, students evaluate their individual placement experience. Students complete a standardised electronic placement evaluation form, which has been developed by the Faculty of Health & Life Sciences for use across all healthcare students at Coventry University. Post-placement reports are generated from the data provided by the students.

Collective student feedback is also collected by the dietetic placement co-ordinator from each student cohort via group discussion, which focuses on the identification of potential areas for improvement as well as examples of good practice.

Prior to finishing in their respective placement locations students also complete a post-placement evaluation form to provide the local lead practice educator with information concerning the student placement experience.

- **Practice educator evaluation**

  After each cohort of A, B and C placements has been completed, post-placement evaluation forms are completed by the lead practice educator for each placement-providing organisation and returned to the university.

- **Visiting tutor evaluation**

  Again, after each cohort of A, B and C placements has been completed, visiting tutors complete and return post-placement evaluations.

The information collected from these processes is evaluated and action taken as appropriate.

The university QA mechanisms also apply to clinical practice modules and consist of;

- Regular course team meetings; practice placements are a standing agenda item.
- Coventry University FHLS Strategic Placement Group (SPGM). This multidisciplinary group is a joint university and practice group to facilitate placement quality.
- Boards of Study; placement practices are a standing item on the agenda of programme boards.
- External examiner scrutiny.
- Student course consultative forum where students are able to raise matters regarding practice placements.

The external monitoring of placements is also performed via the commissioning processes.

2. Informal placement evaluation processes

There are a variety of informal mechanisms available to monitor placement quality, these include;

- One-to-one discussions with practice educators or members of the academic staff
- Discussions with practice educators via meetings of the West Midlands Student Training Group