

Guidelines for Practice Education Placements in Private Practice

The purpose of this document is to provide private practice owners and / or managers* with additional information on supervising students from one of the five Universities in Ireland.

**Referred to as 'the practice' throughout this document*

It is important for the practice to discuss their individual needs, and what they can offer as a placement or part placement, with the practice education team at the various universities.

1) Selection of Placement Sites

The Practice Education Coordinator (PEC) from the various universities will liaise with the practice to identify potential for student placement(s).

If a new site is identified, a member of the university practice education team will contact the practice to discuss the placement requirements.

The requirements for selection of a new placement site include:

- The supervising physiotherapist must be CORU registered and adhere to the PRB Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.
- Access to physiotherapy services that reflect normal context and environments of practice to ensure quality learning experiences that will enable students to meet the CORU Standards of Proficiency.
- An agreement signed by the practice educator / clinical site manager**, indicating acceptance of responsibilities to ensure the placement supports the achievement of the standards of proficiency.
- Roles, responsibilities & expectations for placement outlined in the University Practice Education manual / handbook and placement agreement can be met.
- Commitment from the practice educator to complete all assessment requirements (Clinical Placement Assessment form).
- Practice educator(s) must commit to participate in regular training and support. This may take the form of one to one on-site or online training, scheduled workshops, or training days.
- Practice educators will engage in regular communication with members of the practice education team as necessary.

*** Referred to as 'practice educators' throughout this document*

2) Policies and Procedures

The **Practice Education Manual or Handbook** outlines policies and procedures for placement. There may be some variations between universities, but it is broadly similar.

Examples of Policies and Procedures include:

Prior to placement	Preplacement requirements: The university is responsible for example manual handling, CPR, health screening, HSEland certs
During placement	Uniform, absence, IPC, underperforming etc
After Placement	Procedure for submission of CAF/ grades back to the university

3) Practice Education Placement Documents

Examples of documentation used on placement include:

- Clinical Placement Assessment Form (CAF)
- Feedback forms
- Placement Portfolio

Prior to commencement of the placement, each university practice education team will advise as to the requirements.

4) Models of Practice Education Placement

The **Early-stage placements** are observation placements. These are typically for first- and second year Bachelor student placements and first year Masters student placements.

Later-stage placements are under supervision of the practice educator. The students' need hands on experience in assessment & treatment / management, rehabilitation, classes etc. These are for third- and fourth-year Bachelor student placements and second year Masters student placements.

There are various models of placement. These include, but are not limited to:

- Full Time - with one educator
- Full time - shared between 2 educators. Example would be 2 days with one educator and 3 with another, or 2 long days each.
- Part Time - shared with another clinical site. This could be another private practice site, Primary care etc.

5) Duration of Placements / Work Hours

The duration of placements and work hours varies between the universities.

- Placements can be between 1 – 10 weeks in duration.
- The average is 32-37 hours a week.
- Flexible working days (including evening work) is acceptable.

6) Assessment

The Clinical Placement Assessment Form (CAF) was introduced in 2007. It was devised by four of the Schools of Physiotherapy in the Republic of Ireland and has three different levels, according to which year / stage of the student and level of guidance required:

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Prior to placement the university will specify which level CAF is used for each individual placement.

7) Experience / Observation of Private Practice

The student can gain experience, observe, and be involved in various areas of private practice. A few examples include (this list is not exhaustive):

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- Client / patient interactions
- Private Practice as a Business
- Normal day to day activities of Private Practice
- Students observe and get involved in sessions
- Classes
- Extra 'free rehab time' after patients paid session
- Audits/ projects

8) Benefits to the Private Practice

Supervising students has several benefits for the practice, some of which include:

- Two-way exchange of information, knowledge, and evidence
- Student lead Quality Improvement Projects
- Increases the likelihood of candidates seeking employment in Private Practice, if the experience has been good and rewarding
- Future graduates will be better prepared for work in Private Practice
- Providing placement to local students who may seek employment in the area in the future
- Student can be an 'extra pair of hands' for classes and other activities, making physiotherapists available to see other service users
- The practice educators will be invited to CPD events offered by universities

9) Contact Details

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