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School of Health

Pre-Registration Nursing

Learning Disability Field Handbook

LEARNING DISABILITY NURSING FIELD HANDBOOK

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**Framework for Pre-Registration Nursing**

**BSc (Hons) and Dip/HE**

**Learning Disability Nursing Field**

**Student Handbook**

**Introduction**

***Welcome to the Learning Disability Nursing Field!***

On behalf of the Learning Disability team of the School of Health I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your success in gaining a place on the course and to extend to you a warm and heartfelt welcome.

The Learning Disability Nursing Field has a clear and unique identity within the Pre-registration framework and has been developed to focus on the health needs of individuals with a learning disability and their families.

As a learning disability nursing student you will be quickly introduced to the principles and practices of learning disability nursing. This will assist you in developing the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes that you will require in order for you to contribute in a professional manner to the holistic care of individuals with a learning disability.

The theoretical component of the course will enable you to explore the concepts of learning disability and to identify the physical, psychological and social health needs of individuals and their families.

**Learning Disability Nursing Field Philosophy**

The philosophy of the Learning Disability Field is that we believe that people with learning disabilities have a right to skilled support that enables them to live with others safely and healthily in the community and that the role of the learning disability nurse is to work in partnership with service users, families and members of the multi-professional and multi-agency team to provide support of the highest quality to people with learning disabilities.

On completion of the course you will have the knowledge and skills required to achieve the personalisation agenda (partnership working, communication), and you will be competent in working in ways that are inclusive and valuing. You will have the ability to meet complex needs in a range of settings. You will be able to meet the basic needs of all and focus on the health needs of a person with a learning disability through effective partnership working and by assessing need and planning evidence based interventions. You will be required to support and lead, when appropriate, the provision of excellent healthcare to people with a learning disability in all settings (DH, 2007b) and take on leadership roles (Michael, 2008).

There is an inter-relationship between your development and learning and the care individuals will receive now and in the future. As a learning disability nursing student you are a unique and developing individual. The team will endeavour to facilitate your empowerment through which you can optimise your own knowledge and skills as a committed learning disability nurse. As recruits to this course you will be tomorrow’s nurses for individuals with learning disabilities. You are seen as agents of change, not merely passive recipients of education but active participants who, through lifelong learning will influence the future of learning disability services.

We hope you enjoy your time with us at The University of Northampton and are ultimately successful in achieving your ambition to be a registered learning disability nurse.

The aim of the field is to prepare you for practice as a competent, accountable, reflective and critical registered learning disability nurse.

**Student Support**

A variety of sources of support are available to student’s studying at UoN such as Student Services, Information Services and the Centre for Academic Practice and there are further details set out later in this handbook. In addition to these University wide support systems, the learning disability nursing team provides support specific to the subject area and personal tutor support for students studying learning disability nursing courses. The learning disability teaching team are committed to supporting students in the subject area and enabling their needs to be met in the most effective and appropriate way. Several levels of support are provided for you to access as explained below:

**Personal Tutorials:**

* These are one to one tutorials usually with your designated personal academic tutor. Where issues are affecting your progression on the course and are of a confidential or personal nature it is not appropriate for these to be discussed in open forum in a group tutorial or support session.
* You will need to make an appointment to see your personal academic tutor.
* Should your personal academic tutor be unavailable and your concerns are of an urgent or emergency nature such as a family bereavement or ill-health, please contact another member of the learning disability teaching team. However, it should be a genuine emergency. You should plan for areas such as assignments and portfolio completion. These do not constitute an emergency.

**Contacting Lecturers in the Team.**

* ***Please use email when you wish to contact a member of the learning disability teaching team.*** This system ensures that you and the lecturer have a record of communication. It helps if you reply to emails by clicking the ‘reply’ button so that communication on one topic is easy to follow through each contact. If you have copied others in you will need to consider whether to use ‘reply to all’ to keep everybody informed.
* The learning disability teaching team are happy for you to contact any member of the team in the absence of the person you intended to contact such as the module leader, personal academic tutor or field leader.

It is hoped that by implementing this policy, students will have regular access to support throughout their course, that you will know who to contact, how, where, when and for what!

**Learning Disability Nursing Field lecturers**

The Learning Disability Teaching Team is based at The University of Northampton, Park Campus.

The table below provides contact information for each member of the team:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name | **Contact Information** |
| **John Page-Senior Lecturer** | Nexus  Phone: 01604 - 892859  E-mail: [john.page@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:brian.houltram@northampton.ac.uk) |
| **John Turnbull-Senior Lecturer** | Nexus  Phone: 01604 - 892521  E-Mail: [john.turnbull@north](mailto:john.turnbull@northampton.ac.uk)[ampton.a](mailto:john.turnbull@northampton.ac.uk)[c.uk](mailto:john.turnbull@northampton.ac.uk) |

**Centre for academic practice (CfAP):**

CfAP provides academic guidance and resources to students to help them achieve their academic potential. It is staffed by academics and support staff who can offer support in all aspects of the undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum. The Centre for Academic Practice (Cfap) is a valuable resource that all University of Northampton students can access when they require further academic support. Cfap recognises that every individual has a different approach to learning and therefore they offer a diverse range of teaching methods and resources: from study packs, to online and class-based workshops (you need to log in to Nile to access these links), to one-to-one tutorials, telephone and online (Skype and email) tutorials. All these resources aim to help students with their academic skills.

**Library and IT: Resources and Support:**

The University has libraries at both Avenue and Park, which are resourced to support the courses based at each site.  As well as books, magazines and journals in print, the library also provides access to thousands of online e-books and e-journals that you can access anytime and anywhere.   Laptop points and wireless access is provided throughout the libraries and both libraries provide space where you can work, either in groups or individually, including the provision of quiet study areas and group study rooms.  While many students like to bring their own laptops onto campus, the libraries also have PCs (both sites) and Macs (Avenue only) for you to use, as well as providing laptops and media equipment that you can borrow.

To support you throughout your studies, the library has a team of Academic Librarians who can help you find the information you need for your assignments.  The Academic Librarians are specialists at finding accurate, relevant and current information.  At key stages during your course, it is likely your tutors will arrange a session with an Academic Librarian, either as part of your lecture and seminar programme or as a special session in the library.  During these sessions your librarian will talk to you about any specialist resources and tools that the University has for your course.   Students often find that they need individual support and so the Academic Librarians also offer one-to-one sessions where they can advise you on topics such as finding information and referencing.

To find out more about what the library has to offer and how to contact for help go to [www.northampton.ac.uk/library](http://www.northampton.ac.uk/library)

**Teaching and Learning**

The aim of the new field is to provide opportunities for you to learn the practical and theoretical skills necessary for you to be the confident innovators (DH, 2008) that the health service requires. We will expect you to acquire knowledge, demonstrate understanding and then be able to apply it both in theoretical and practical aspects of the course. You will be expected to develop appropriate group working, self- management and problem solving skills as well as having the essential clinical skills to practice effectively (NMC, 2010). To achieve this a range of learning approaches will be used with online engagement identified as one of the primary learning approaches used for the LD field students throughout the programme. Details of the modules that make up the award undertaken are set out below in pages 14-19.

**Clinical skills**

The range of clinical skills needed by newly registered nurses will be taught in both University and practice settings. Assessment of competence in these skills will generally be through the practice portfolio. However, some skills required within the portfolio will be assessed via simulation (for example, some elements within the infection prevention and control element of the portfolio and some skills identified within the Practice Development Modules undertaken at each level of the programme).

**Inter-professional Learning**

The NMC Standards for pre-registration nursing education (NMC, 2010) require students to have the opportunity to learn with, and from, other health and social care professionals as an important element of the process enabling nurses to meet complex needs using appropriate multi-professional plans of care and support.

You will attend practice based inter-agency learning activities in each year of the programme through attendance at practice forums focused around a range of topic areas identified and organised by Trust partners. In addition, you will have the opportunity to develop this area while undertaking the enhancement activities set out below. These opportunities will be underpinned by knowledge gained through the theory modules undertaken (which will also require shared learning activities with other nursing fields).

**Practice Learning Opportunities**

You will undertake a minimum of 6 periods of assessed practice learning during the 3 years with each year including two periods of practice learning and an additional 4 week block in Years 1 &2 that may either be used for enhancement periods or for students who need to recover items of referred practice to achieve necessary competence to progress from Stage 1 to Stage 2 (at the end of the first year of the programme) and from Stage 2 to Stage 3 (at the end of Year 2 of the programme).

The periods of assessed practice will expose you to a range of people and settings so that all the competencies needed for registration are achieved.

You will also be **required** to undertake practice learning that provides you with experience of the 24 hour and 7-day a week nature of care during the three years of the programme. A professional requirement of the course is that you demonstrate that you have undertaken night duty in order to meet the 24 hour needs of clients. You will be expected to work a minimum of 30 hours of night duty, but no more than 90 hours, over the three year course. This can be completed at any time during the three years of the course.

**Support during practice placements.**

Students are allocated a Practice Mentor in each practice placement. Mentors are staff with relevant professional qualifications who have undertaken a period of preparation in the support and assessment of students in practice. Mentors are there to provide you with support and guidance in the practice setting to enable you to achieve your practice learning outcomes. They will be your first point of contact for support with practice based issues. However where they are unable to help you also have access to the Manager for the clinical area and the Clinical Placement Facilitator for the Trust. Each practice area also has a named Link Lecturer who will be a member of the Learning Disability teaching team. For more information about the role of Mentors and Link Lecturers please refer to your practice portfolio.

**Enhancement activities**

As a registered nurse you must acquire the basic skills necessary to meet the essential needs of all people and the more complex needs associated with the learning disability field (NMC, 2010). This will require that you have experience of people with mental health needs, of children and young people, of pregnant women and of people with common physical health needs and long term conditions. You will encounter experiences within your three year programme that involve care delivery to service users from all fields of nursing and pregnant women. You will be provided with work guides that direct your learning towards recognition of the specific needs of service users from these fields. Within these work guides you will be expected to complete the activities under the supervision of your mentors and Personal Academic Teacher.

You will then be required to complete a summative reflection that demonstrates your understanding and learning about meeting these essential needs of all people.

In addition, periods within these four week blocks may also be used to experience care delivery in a wide variety of settings that reflects the diversity encountered during the life time of a person with a learning disability (these will be negotiated with your personal academic tutor in the first instance)

**Global healthcare and European experiences**

Current clinical practice has both a local and a global dimension as it is influenced by research and practice from both a national and international perspective.

This global perspective will be covered within the theory content of both field and generic modules (for example, as part of the content of the Level 4 Foundations of Support for People with a Learning Disability and within the Applied Research in Public Health module at Level 5). There may also be an opportunity for students to experience care outside of the UK at appropriate points of the course, in accordance with the requirements of the nursing programme and through negotiation with your personal academic tutor and field lead.

**Assessment:**

The field team believe that assessment has a number of purposes, which are of benefit to students, staff and ultimately service users. These include:

* Effective achievement of learning outcomes for theory and practice
* Motivation for you to organise your study so that it is effective and enables you to meet deadlines
* Provide feedback concerning your progress to you, your PAT and other lecturers
* Underpin university quality assurance processes within the UoN
* Enable judgements to made about your level of achievement

Assessment is integral to the learning process and a variety of methods have been used to enable you to develop and demonstrate your learning. The approaches used will enable regular feedback from both the module co-ordinators and your PAT. This will assist you in identifying your progress and future areas of learning. The UoN regulations apply to assessed items, including any proposed supplementary regulations and information on assignment submissions, referrals etc. is contained within the regulations. UoN assessment regulations can be accessed by clicking on the ***Policies, procedures and regulations*** link on the Student Hub web page

Over the time of your course circumstances **may** arise that require you to seek additional time to complete and submit an assignment. There are procedures to follow should this arise. The following are areas that you need to familiarise yourself with:

**Extensions:**

The time given for an extension is from 1 to a maximum of 14 days. In the case of a theoretical assignment you **must** seek permission from the appropriate module co-ordinator **prior** to the assignment submission date.

If the extension relates to your practice portfolio then you **must** seek permission from your PAT.

If you think you will require longer than 14 days you should apply for mitigating circumstances

**Mitigating circumstances:**

This is the term used to describe non-academic factors that affect your ability to take or submit an assessment (e.g. illness). To ensure the student’s claim relates to special circumstances and is therefore legitimate the circumstances must be **unexpected, unavoidable** and **serious.** In this situation it is the student’s responsibility to inform the module co-ordinator/PAT of any matter (personal, academic, medical or other), which may be relevant to their academic/clinical performance and to supply appropriate supporting evidence. The information should be provided as soon as possible and **prior** to the assessment. The student will be required to complete a mitigating circumstances form and submit this, along with their evidence, to the academic registrar. More detailed information and the form to be completed if the student needs to make an application for mitigating circumstances can be found via the Exams and Assessment tab on the University of Northampton Student Hub web page.

**Plagiarism and academic misconduct:**

It is important that any work a student submits represents their own work and not that of others even if the action is unintentional. To do is termed plagiarism.

Plagiarism involves incorporation, by a student, in an assignment, material which is not their own in the sense that all or a substantial part of the work has been copied without any attempt at attribution or has been incorporated even if it is the student’s own work when it is wholly or substantially the work of another person.

To avoid plagiarism the **University of Northampton Plagiarism Avoidance Course** **(UNPAC)** has been developed to assist students to maintain academic integrity by enabling them to understand what constitutes plagiarism and how it can be avoided. UNPAC is an online course available via NILE. All students are strongly encouraged to view the site and work through the various exercises.

To further assist both staff and students you will be required to submit some of your theoretical assignments through TURNITIN. This is a tool that allows students and staff to check papers for originality, and also includes a range of online grading features.

**Confidentiality:**

The confidentiality of patients and providers of health and social care expect that students from the UON will maintain confidentiality at all times as per their professional code (NMC, 2010)

**Submission of coursework:**

Coursework should be submitted as instructed on the briefing sheet for your assignment. Normally this will through turnitin on NILE through *submit your work* virtual button for your relevant module.

Online course submission details – you will be advised how to submit online assessments by module co-ordinators.

**Results:**

Module handbooks will identify the date an assignment’s results are due to be published.

All results recommended by the Board of examiners are subject to ratification by Senate and are therefore **provisional** until after this time.

**MODULE AND ASSESSMENT PLAN**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level | Module | Level / CATS rating | Assessment |
| 4 | The Development of Personal and Professional Self | 4/40 | Theoretical portfolio of evidence; Exam, decision making presentation, annotated bibliography, reflective essay and application of number exam |
| Foundations of Support for People with a Learning Disability | 4/20 | Essay, Care Plan |
| Practice development 1 | 4/10 | Theoretical portfolio of evidence; record of skill assessment, field experience guides |
| Nursing Practice 1 | 4/50 | Practice Portfolio |
| 5 | Applied Research in Public Health | 5/20 | 5000 word essay |
| The Journey Through the Lifecycle (LD) | 5/40 | Electronic portfolio, viva voce exam |
| Practice Development 2 | 5/10 | Theoretical portfolio of evidence; record of skill assessment. |
| Nursing Practice 2 | 5/50 | Practice Portfolio |
| 6 | Dissertation Practice Focused Project | 40 | Practice improvement project |
| Managing the Complexities of Care | 30 | Electronic portfolio, reflective essay |
| Practice Development 2 | 10 | Theoretical portfolio of evidence; record of skill assessment, field experience guides, reflective account and application of number exam |
| Nursing Practice 2 | 40 | Practice Portfolio |

The **course plan** shows the pattern of attendance for theoretical input and clinical practice in each year. Current course plans can be accessed for every cohort via the School of Health Student Placement Office Nile site.

**Learning Disability Field**

**Student journey**

During the development of the field specific curriculum, the team were conscious that the future field specific nurse would need to act autonomously within diverse and changing areas of practice with the ability to respond to planned and unexpected situations. With this in mind you will undertake a journey of development through the following levels:

**Level 4**

Participate in the delivery of identified plans of care

**Level 5**

Recognise and initiate appropriate and timely interventions through discussions with a first level nurse

**Level 6**

Manage care using appropriate leadership, time management and decision making skills which incorporate a sound evidence base and rationale

To facilitate your progress throughout these levels the field has utilised a modular framework. Within each level you will initially undertake a Practice Development modulefollowed bytheoretical and practice modules.

At level four, two of the theoretical modules are shared across nursing fields and the third module along with the two practice learning opportunities are field specific.

At levels five and six all modules (with the exception of the dissertation module) are field specific although the Level 6 field specific module will also contain cross field learning around principles of leadership and management and the dissertation module will have a field focus.

**Level 4**

The programme begins with a period of induction to the programme. This will include an induction to Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust as part of your preparation for practice learning. You will also have opportunities to ensure that you are confident in using the online platforms prior to commencing the Level 4 theory and practice modules. The table below indicates the aims of the module undertaken. The Development of Personal and Professional Self module will develop study skills necessary for undergraduate study and introduce elements of enquiry and research as a foundation before these are further developed in the theoretical component in Year 2 of the Programme. You will also learn anatomy and physiology associated with the main body systems, and the application of this knowledge with NPR 1015 Development of Personal & Professional self. Practice learning opportunities will expose students to nursing care and support for people with a learning disability in a range of situations and settings.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Module Code | Module name | Module co-ordinator | Module aim |
| NPR1015 | Development of Personal and Professional Self | P Stuart | The module will enable you to:   * Acquire and develop the skills and attitudes needed to engage in undergraduate study * Explore the professional knowledge base required for undertaking your future nursing role |
| NPR 1016 | Practice Development 1 | P Roke | This module aims to prepare the student for, and consolidate their safe participation in the delivery of essential skills. |
| NPR1017P | Nursing Practice 1 | P Roke | To demonstrate that the student has achieved the skills and professional behaviours identified at the first progression point by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC 2010)  The student nurse will demonstrate the ability to participate in holistically delivered patient-centred compassionate care in a wide range of settings. |
| NPR1019 | Foundations of Support for People with a Learning Disability | J R Page | To promote an understanding of learning disability and competence in providing practical support within valuing principles.  To begin to develop competence in the care needs of people with a learning disability. |

**Level 5**

This year includes a 40 credit field specific module (Journey through the Lifecycle in Learning Disability) that will build on the field learning from Level 4 and explore issues of nursing care and support for people with a learning disability with more complex needs (this learning will be mirrored within the practice learning opportunities). The Applied Research in Public Health module is primarily a cross field module although there will be a field focus to the module assessments.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Module Code | Module name | Module co-ordinator | Module aim |
| NPR2056 | Applied Research in Public Health | J Ridge | To provide the opportunity for students to explore the concept of the research process as a vehicle for developing knowledge, skills and professional curiosity in order to inform public health practice within clinical fields |
| NPR2057 | Practice Development 2 | R Boyle | This module aims to prepare the student for, and consolidate their initiation of the delivery of essential skills. |
| NPR2058P | Nursing Practice 2 | S Gray | To demonstrate that the student has achieved the skills and professional behaviours identified at the second progression point by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC 2010).  The student nurse will demonstrate the ability to initiate holistic patient-centred compassionate care in a wide range of settings. |
| NPR2066 | The Journey Through the Lifecycle | J R Page | To provide an understanding of the changing needs of the individual and family throughout the lifecycle  To provide understanding and skills related to the facilitation of physical, mental, behavioural and social well-being |

**Level 6**

In the final part of the programme you will undertake more independent study, using the academic skills developed to this point. You will also be expected to demonstrate appropriate levels of leadership and management skills during practice learning opportunities with the final practice experience being undertaken with a signoff mentor who will decide whether you have achieved the required standards of proficiency for safe and effective practice for entry to the register.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Module Code | Module name | Module co-ordinator | Module aim |
| NPR4003 | Dissertation Practice Focused Project | C O’Dell | To enable students to utilize a previously approved project plan within practice to evaluate/ audit an existing service or standard of care.  To develop a collaborative research partnership with colleagues in practice. |
| NPR3027 | Practice Development 3 | W Hughes | To prepare the student for, and consolidate, leading the delivery of care in practice.  To enable the student to manage the transition to registered nurse |
| NPR3028P | Nursing Practice 3 | C Clinker | To demonstrate that the student has achieved the competencies needed to meet the criteria for registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (2010).  The student nurse will demonstrate management and leadership in the provision of care in a wide range of settings. |
| NPR3030 | Managing the Complexities of Care | J Turnbull | To develop competence in managing care in a collaborative way within a multi-professional context.  To develop and promote service improvement processes that are grounded in current thinking and policy frameworks |