

UWE Placement and Practice Learning Lockdown Update January 2021

Last updates July, September & December 2020

This is coming out to you as a Practice Learning Co-ordinator, however, I would be grateful if you could circulate to your Practice Educators and Supervisors who have UWE students.

Dear all,

I hope you remain safe and well.

Following the Government announcement of an England wide lockdown we thought it would be useful to clarify the situation for health and social care programmes here at UWE.

Placements

Firstly – we are NOT stopping any placements. Our facility Director of Placements has been in communication with other HEI's across the country and so far there is no indication of anyone pulling students from placement. We will of course need to stay in close contact with you all as you face increasing pressures to provide services and support students.

Key Points

- The university remains open to support all of our students, as do our buildings and halls of residence
- Our health and social care programmes will continue to be delivered in a blended manner, with online learning being supplemented with clinical skills/simulation taking place face to face where required
- Placement activity will continue to take place as usual and the support mechanisms for students and supervisors remain in place
- Students are being advised to follow the Government guidance for the return to university where they are attending face to face sessions/ placement. This includes two Covid lateral flow tests 72 hours apart. The guidance can be found here and testing remains voluntary, although we are emphasising the importance of testing: <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/news/coronavirus/asymptomatic-covid-19-testing-for-students>
- All students are receiving regular wellbeing calls.

Where lateral flow testing is available in a student's placement or in circumstances where a student already has lateral flow testing kits at home, in negotiation with the placement area, this can replace being tested at UWE.

Vaccinations

UWE is aware that a number of organisations are rolling out vaccination programmes and are including students in these roll outs. We will work with you to ensure students recognise the importance of taking up vaccinations as a personal and professional responsibility. Please do let me know if your organisation is one of these and you plan to include students in any vaccination processes. We need to ensure students are protected while in practice and are discussing the feasibility of our OH provider managing a vaccination rollout.

Essential worker status for health and social care students

This was agreed by DFE and the Welsh equivalent and there is no indication that this will stop. A letter of "proof" to indicate that children of H and SC students can attend school is available to SW students via their Practice Tutor.

Shielding

Those who are shielding are now being advised to shield again. A small number of students will be in this position or be caring for someone who is. In March we did not question any student in these situations and we are not doing so again. Of course they will have to make up any hours of practice missed and should notify Practice Absence Line who record COVID related absences separately as well as notifying and discussing with their Practice Learning Team. A shielding guidance is currently being drafted.

Teaching

Our health and social care programmes will continue to be delivered in a blended manner, with online learning being supplemented with clinical skills/simulation taking place face to face where required

Keeping in touch

We are keen to support you where we can during this difficult time, so please do not hesitate to get in touch if support for learning for students becomes more challenging and you experience service delivery problems impacting on placements.

Thank you for your continued support of our students

Kind regards

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