



Teesside  
University

# BSc (Hons) Dietetics (Apprenticeship)

Placement Handbook for Practice Educators

2022



School of **Health & Life Sciences**

[tees.ac.uk/health&lifesciences](https://tees.ac.uk/health&lifesciences)

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## Introduction

On behalf of the dietetics team thank you for your commitment to be practice-based education and supporting learners on our BSc (Hons) Dietetics course at Teesside University. Placements provide learners with the opportunity to meet the complexities of real dietetic practice situations within an appropriate range of placement sites.

This handbook is designed for use by practice educators to enable full understanding of the requisites for practice-based learning. It is also available via [the practice support website](#). The apprentices have access to a handbook which is more learner-focused.

A total of 1000 hours of practice-based learning is required prior to graduation. This is facilitated by the employing organisation in discussion with the University course team.

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## Background information



### Organisation of Practice Placements

Placements are arranged and allocated by the health care organisation where the apprentice is employed, in discussion with the University course team.

Practice based learning opportunities include NHS, research, public health and third sector placements. Practice Educators provide appropriate levels of teaching, supervision and monitoring of progress with feedback.

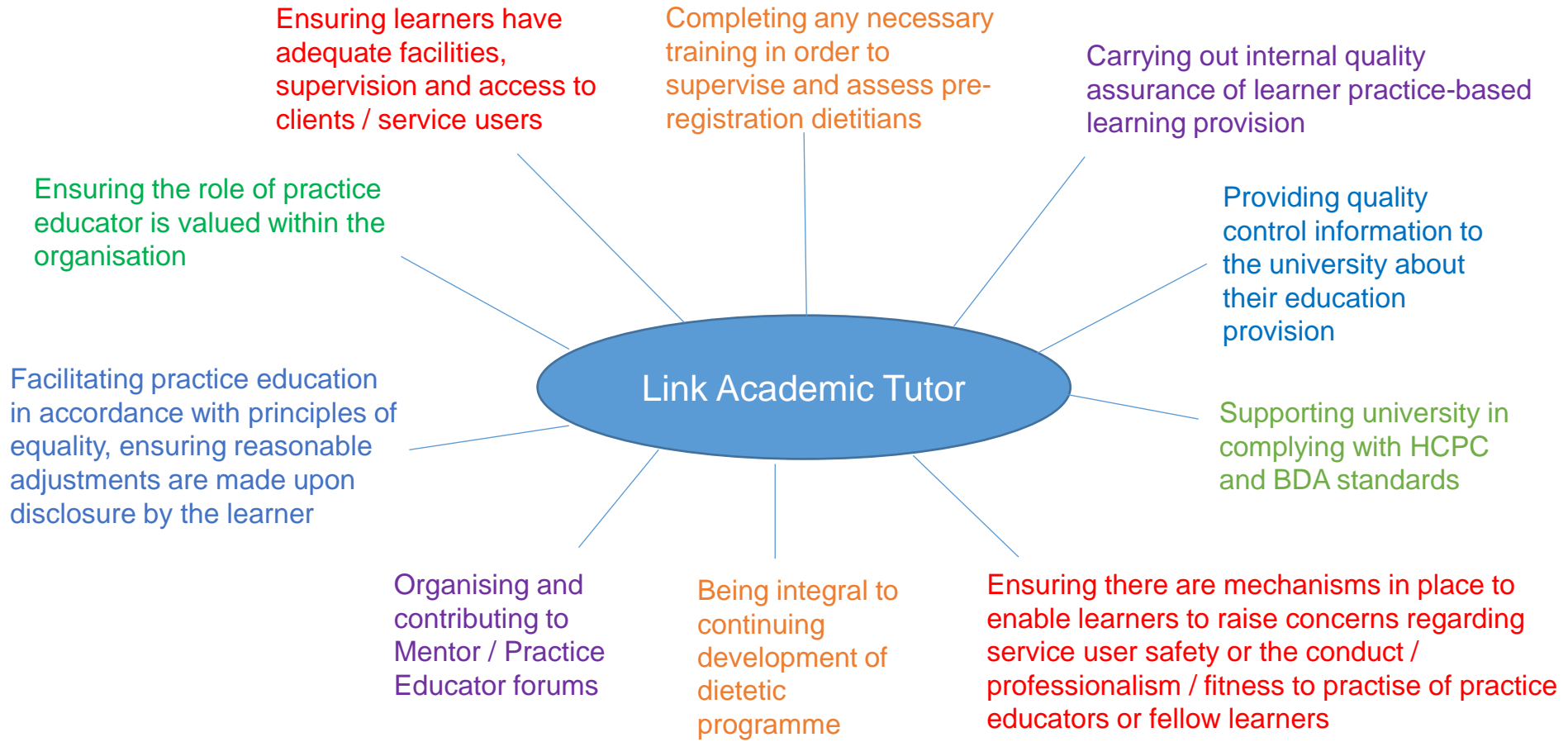
We recognise that Practice Educators work hard to offer a range of practice experience using a variety of models of supervision. Learners are strongly advised to engage and make the most of all opportunities available in a busy working environment.

### Individual Requests from learners

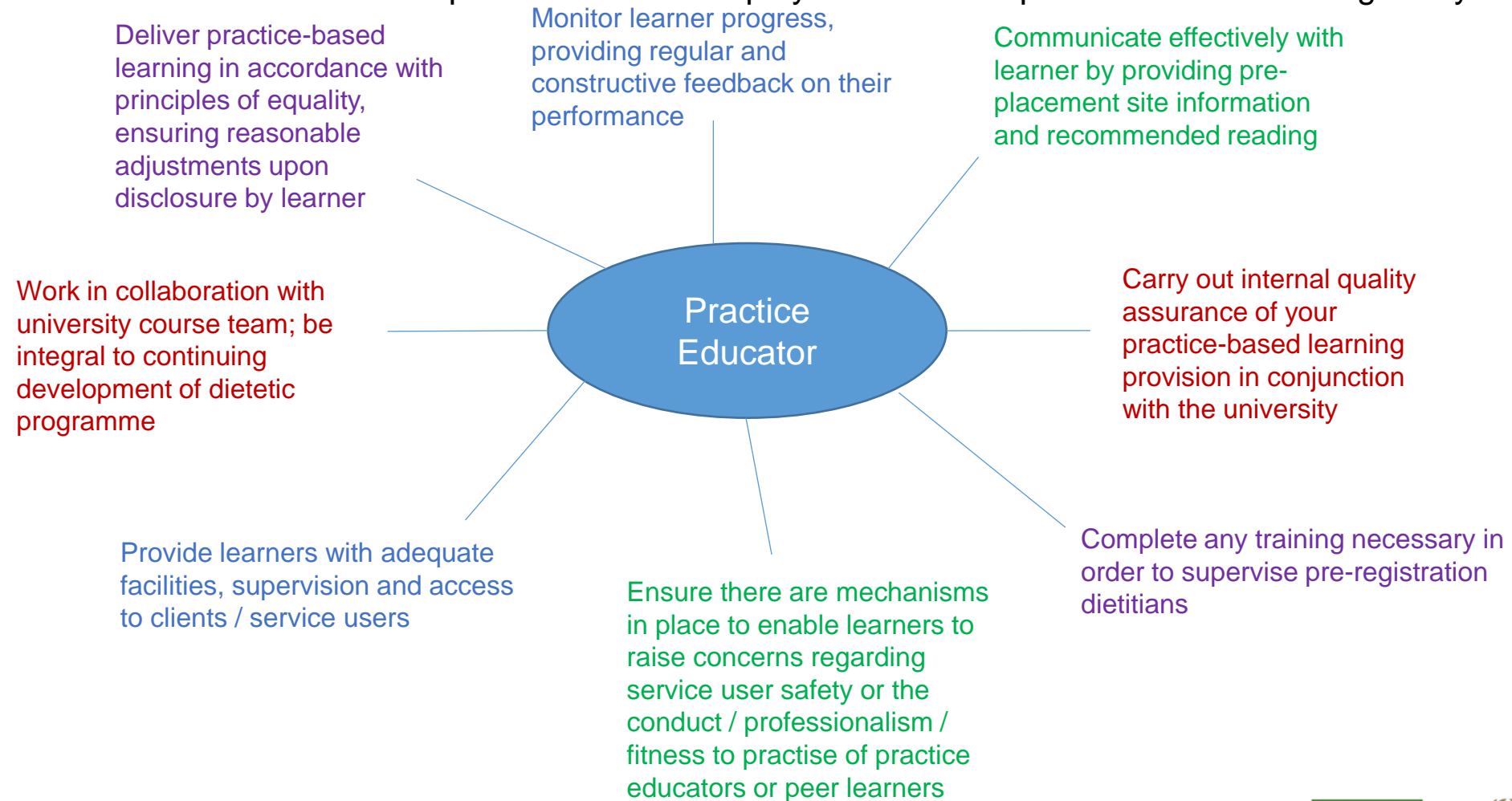
Apprentices are advised that provision cannot be made for learner's personal requests relating to preferences for location and practice area. Any extreme personal circumstances should be identified and discussed, in the first instance, with the employer and Link Academic Tutor, and subsequently with the Course Leader.

Therefore learners on placement should be able to work the hours required. If the learner's situation changes while on placement affecting their engagement with the placement the Link Academic Tutor should be notified immediately.

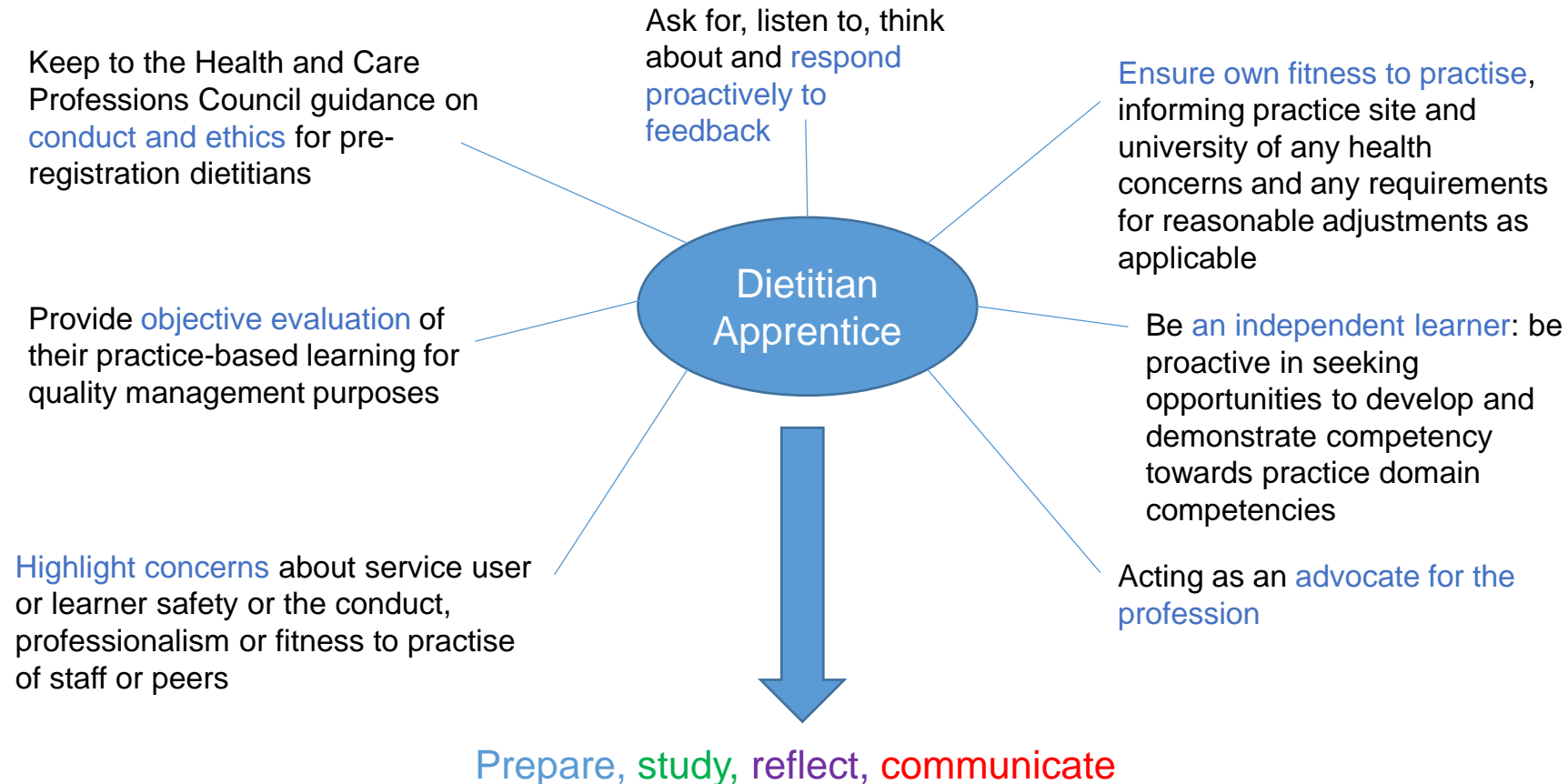
The Link Academic Tutor is a member of the university academic staff who oversees practice education by:



**Practice Educators** sit within the placement site and play a vital role in practice-based learning. They should:



## What is expected of me?



# Course Structure

YEAR	BLOCK 1 (14 weeks)	BLOCK 2 (14 weeks)	BLOCK 3 (14 weeks)
1	Level 4		
	An Intro to Professional Practice (20) Structure & Function for AHP (20)	Health & Wellbeing in Professional Practice (20) Nutritional Biochemistry (20)	Human Nutrition (20) Public Health Nutrition (20) <b>Dietetic Placement A, 75 hours</b>
2	Level 5		
	Food Science & Systems (20) Genetics, Microbiology & Immunology (20)	Nutrition & Dietetic Practice 1 (20) Pharmacology for Dietetic Practice (20) <b>Dietetic Placement B, 375 hours</b>	Nutrition & Dietetic Practice 2 (20)
3	Level 6		
	Employability, Leadership & Quality Improvement for the Future Ready AHP (20) Project Design for Dietetics (20) <b>Dietetic Placement C, 375 hours</b>	Major Project for Dietetics (40)	<b>Dietetic Elective Placement, 187.5 hours</b>



## What will the apprentice learn in year 1?

The academic year is divided into three 14-week blocks or semesters. During each block, you will study 20-credit modules. In year 1, these modules are studied at level 4.

BLOCK 1	BLOCK 2	BLOCK 3
An Introduction to Professional Practice	Health and Wellbeing in Professional Practice	Human Nutrition
This module introduces you to the core skills, values and behaviours that underpin professional practice within health care.	Learners explore models of health including social, psychological, physical, cultural and environmental and how these influence quality of care.	This module considers nutritional requirements through the life cycle, including deficiency, toxicity and the role, function and metabolism of key dietary components.
Structure and Function for Allied Health Professionals	Nutritional Biochemistry	Public Health Nutrition
During this module, you will develop knowledge and understanding of normal structural and functional anatomy and physiology	Here, learners will develop knowledge and understanding of the key principles of biochemistry, including cell structure, chemical bonding and reactions and biological pathways.	Learners examine the need to promote health in dietetic practice, by looking at policy, populations, behaviour change, the obesogenic environment and inequalities in health.

## What will the apprentice learn in year 2?

The academic year is divided into three 14-week blocks or semesters. During each block, you will study 20-credit modules. In year 2, these modules are studied at level 5.

BLOCK 1	BLOCK 2	BLOCK 3
Food Science and Systems	Nutrition and Dietetic Practice 1	Nutrition and Dietetic Practice 2
Learners will develop their knowledge of food science focusing on food production, processing and institutional catering systems. Additionally, learners will practise the skill of nutritional analysis, making therapeutic diet recommendations.	In this module, learners are introduced to the role of the dietitian in the promotion of health and prevention of disease. Learners will assess, diagnose, treat, monitor and evaluate common dietary disorders of the major body systems.	Here, learners further develop their understanding of the role of the dietitian in the management of more complex dietetic conditions. Additional thought will be given to application and justification of dietary interventions for promotion of health and treatment of disease.
Genetics, Microbiology and Immunology	Pharmacology for Dietetic Practice	Dietetic Placement B
Using a blended learning approach, learners will develop an understanding of the key sciences genetics, microbiology and immunology as they apply to the work of a registered dietitian.	This module explores the nature of drugs as chemicals which interact with cellular mechanisms at molecular, systematic and behavioural levels. In studying the key principles of pharmacology learners will apply this to dietetics.	This 375-hour practice-based learning opportunity enables learners to begin to apply and develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours learnt in the classroom. Sites reflect the breadth and diversity of dietetic working environments.

## What will the apprentice learn in year 3?

The academic year is divided into three 14-week blocks or semesters. During each block, you will study 20-credit modules. In year 3, these modules are studied at level 6.

BLOCK 1	BLOCK 2	BLOCK 3
Enhancing Employability, Leadership and Quality Improvement for Future Ready AHP	Major Project for Dietetics	Dietetic Elective Placement
This module explores health care, statutory and professional policies in relation to practice. There is a strong emphasis on personal and professional development, leadership, human factors and quality improvement.	During this module, the learners will contribute to existing or ongoing audits, service evaluations or research projects led by academic and research staff within the School, with collaboration from placement partners.	This 5-week full-time placement consolidates professional values, attitudes and behaviours, applies knowledge to practice and further develops dietetic skills. The learner may negotiate with their employer the location of this final practice-based learning experience.
Project Design for Dietetics	Dietetic Placement C	
Learners will develop a sound understanding of audit, service evaluation, systematic review, research methodologies and the associated ethics and governance processes. They will be equipped with the tools needed to undertake a major project.	This 375-hour practice-based learning opportunity enables learners to apply and further develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours learnt in the first and second year. Sites reflect the breadth and diversity of dietetic working environments.	

## Preparation for practice placement

### How can I prepare for the learner?

Practice-based learning offers learners the opportunity to apply knowledge learnt in their taught university modules, develop dietetic skills and demonstrate professional behaviours and values.

Learners are expected to review their teaching and learning to date and prepare aide memoires to support their practice based learning experience. They are also signposted to the pre-reading and information packs you may provide within your practice environment profile. Please do share local policies and procedures so learners may familiarise themselves prior to the start of placement. This is particularly relevant if the apprentice is unfamiliar with the placement site.

In advance of the learner joining you in practice, please prepare a suitable induction to your practice area and a timetable detailing relevant learning experiences.

You will also need to familiarise yourself with the placement assessment documentation for the applicable stage of training. These documents can be accessed via the [Regional North East and Yorkshire Dietetic Placement Partnership site](#) and the learner's University e-portfolio.

### Who does the learner contact and when?

Apprentices are encouraged to do this in advance of starting their placement. Please acknowledge receipt when you have received it.

When learners contact you they should introduce themselves and check if there are any site-specific requirements. e.g. mandatory IT training, availability of pre-placement packs. Again, this is relevant where the apprentice is unfamiliar with the placement site.

Learners are encouraged to advise you of any learning support needs and whether they have access to a car. They may also enquire about the availability of accommodation nearby.

### How can I get information to the learner?

Pre-placement information packs are a good way to share key practice specific details with the learners. This can be emailed to the learner or made available via your practice environment profile for download. If you would like assistance on preparing a pack, please contact your Link Academic Tutor.

## Start of placement

While you may be the named Practice Educator, it is good for the apprentice to work with other staff and members of the multidisciplinary team. The important thing is to ensure the learner is clear about their role, expectations and that all involved communicate effectively. Review the learner timetable on a weekly basis and note any changes as necessary.

Revisit the placement assessment documentation including the evidence gathering and assessment tools so you know what is expected of the learner. These tools are held within the learner's e-portfolio which they will give you access to. However, you can also access these documents via the [Regional North East and Yorkshire Dietetic Placement Partnership site](#). NOTE: Only registered dietitians may sign off the intermediate and final assessment tools. Where no registered dietitians work at the placement site, a registered dietitian from the employing organisation or University course team will fulfil this role.

Review the learners draft objectives by the end of Week 1 at the latest.

Plan how you will manage to provide the learner with timely feedback both formal and informal and plan this into your day / week.

Don't hesitate to contact your Link Academic Tutor if you have any concerns about the apprentice. Sooner is much better than later.



## How do the apprentices learn on placement?

To get the most out of this practice based learning experience, the learner will draw on prior learning.

As a Practice Educator, you will enable the learner to develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, values and behaviours expected of a dietitian.

Appropriately qualified health and social care professionals, in addition to registered dietitians participate in learner practice-based learning and may assess and provide evidence of achievement of non-dietetic specific competencies.



DIETETIC KNOWLEDGE



DIETETIC SKILLS



DIETETIC VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

Learners will complete a learning contract and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges (SWOC) analysis prior to starting placement. These should be used to create initial SMART goals for placement.

Critical reflection allows learners to develop the competencies within the following practice domains:-

- Health care professionalism
- Communication
- Process for Nutrition and Dietetic Practice
- Quality

Learners maintain a learning log and collate evidence toward competency in their e-Portfolio.

### Study Time

Learners are expected to manage their study outside of the practice placement. Any study time during placement working hours is at the discretion of the Practice Educator.



## How do I assess the apprentice on placement?

Competency is assessed against the regional **Dietetic Practice Placement Competency Framework overleaf**, and available within the placement assessment documentation on the course VLE site.

	Placements			
	A	B	C	Elective
<b>Hours</b>	75	375	375	187.5
<b>Assessment</b>	Formative	Formative and Summative	Formative and Summative	Formative and Summative
	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performance review: Pass / Fail by Practice</li> <li>- E-Portfolio of evidence: Mark awarded by University course team</li> </ul>		Reflective report: Mark awarded by University course team

**The apprentice must pass all practice domains in order to progress to the next placement block or qualify as a dietitian. Re-assessment opportunities are generally made available.**

### Formative review

Informal and formal opportunities to reflect on learner performance with the Practice Educator.

If the apprentice is not progressing as expected for a placement stage, please seek advice from your Link Academic Tutor.

### Summative review

Final assessment opportunity at the end of Placement B and C to reflect on performance with the Practice Educator.

Additional online written submissions (see above table) for marking by the University course team.

# Dietetic Practice Placement Competency Framework

## A Placement (Novice)

Domain	Competency demonstrated
Health care professionalism	1. Consistent professional behaviour within legal and ethical boundaries of their profession
Communication	2. Appropriate communication skills with individuals and groups

## B Placement (Advanced Beginner)

Domain	Competency demonstrated
Health care professionalism	1. Consistent professional behaviour within legal and ethical boundaries of their profession (HCPC code of conduct)
Communication	2. Effective and appropriate communication skills with individuals and groups
Process for Nutrition and Dietetic Practice	<b>SCOPE OF PRACTICE:</b> Demonstrates <u>components</u> of Process, with supervision, as it applies to a variety of health and disease states, in different life cycle stages, and the ability to transfer learning to other contexts/settings.
	3. Applies an evidence-based approach to the identification of nutritional need and assessment
	4. Applies an evidence-based approach to the identification of nutrition and dietetic diagnosis
	5. Applies an evidence-based approach to the planning of nutrition and dietetic interventions
	6. Applies an evidence-based approach to the implementation of nutrition and dietetic interventions
Quality	7. Improves practice through continuous and systematic evaluation

## C Placement (Competent)

Domain	Competency demonstrated
Health care professionalism	1. Consistent professional behaviour within legal and ethical boundaries of their profession
Communication	2. Effective and appropriate communication skills with individuals and groups
Process for Nutrition and Dietetic Practice	<b>SCOPE OF PRACTICE:</b> Demonstrates complete Process, with minimal supervision as appropriate to the practice area, as it applies to a variety of health and disease states, in different life cycle stages, and the ability to transfer learning to other contexts/settings.
	3. Integrates professional knowledge and skills into evidence based decision making and effective dietetic practice.
Quality	4. Improves practice through continuous and systematic evaluation



## What if the learner is not performing well on placement?

If at any time during the practice placement you have concerns about the learner's performance you should contact your named Link Academic Tutor to discuss your concerns. They will be able to support you and the learner.

If you feel that there is a risk that the learner will not achieve one or more of the practice domains by the end of the placement, you must inform the learner and your named Link Academic Tutor, as soon as possible. A tripartite meeting will be arranged between the Practice Educator, learner and your named Link Academic Tutor. Further tripartite meetings will be arranged as necessary.

Tripartite meetings seek to support the Practice Educator and enable the learner to continue to develop and reach their full potential.

If professional issues or issues of public safety give serious cause for concern at any time during a placement, the learner may be removed from the placement.

## Practice placement hours

Apprentices must successfully complete a minimum of 1,000 hours prior to their end-point assessment. The employing organisation will decide how best to fit these placement hours around the learner's academic study and current post. If the apprentice misses significant time due to illness or other mitigating circumstances the placement may be extended, as long as this is convenient for the practice placement site.

### Recording your Hours

Apprentices must ensure that their practice hours are recorded accurately on the **placement hours document**. These must be checked and verified by the Practice Educator.

### Monitoring your Hours

It is the learner's responsibility to monitor their practice hours and notify the Link Academic Tutor if they have a shortfall. If there is a shortfall a strategy to make up the hours will need to be developed in consultation with the Link Academic Tutor and Practice Educator.

### Learner Failure to Attend Work

If a learner does not attend work when expected and does not report an absence, please contact the Placement Office on [SHLSPlacements@tees.ac.uk](mailto:SHLSPlacements@tees.ac.uk)

### Pattern of Working Hours

A pattern of working hours must be agreed with the Practice Educator that satisfies the required number of practice hours for the placement.

If learners are working outside 8.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday they must complete a **Working Hours Timetable** and return it via email to the Link Academic Tutor by the end of the first week of placement. It must be noted that only the usual level of support will be given by the University; Monday to Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm.

When a statutory **Bank Holiday** falls during a placement the day may be taken as such, however, it is essential that this is recorded on the record of placement hours.

If the practice site is operational over the holiday the learner may elect to work that day. This would be an appropriate option if there is a shortfall in the learner's total of practice contact hours.

### Absence

If, for any reason, the apprentice is unable to attend a practice placement, they **must** follow university procedure:-

- Contact Practice Educator prior to time they were next due to be at work (please ensure you provide details of absence reporting for your organisation within your placement environment profile)
- Contact Student Records Office and the Link Academic Tutor at university by 10am ([SHLS-attendance@tees.ac.uk](mailto:SHLS-attendance@tees.ac.uk))

Learners should liaise with practice site re. Return to placement.

Learners **must** close their episode of absence by contacting the university on email above.

## Feedback from learners

### Placement Evaluation

We recognise that Practice Educators welcome constructive feedback from learners. On completion of the placement the learners provide feedback of the placement experience via an electronic Practice Placement Evaluation Tool.

Feedback is **reviewed by the university, reported in the annual Course Report and fed back to the practice sites in a timely way, such that it is useful and informative** to our placement partners.

If there are issues raised which are a cause for concern this is followed up initially with the appropriate named Link Academic Tutor and Course Leader.



# Important Information: What the learners are told

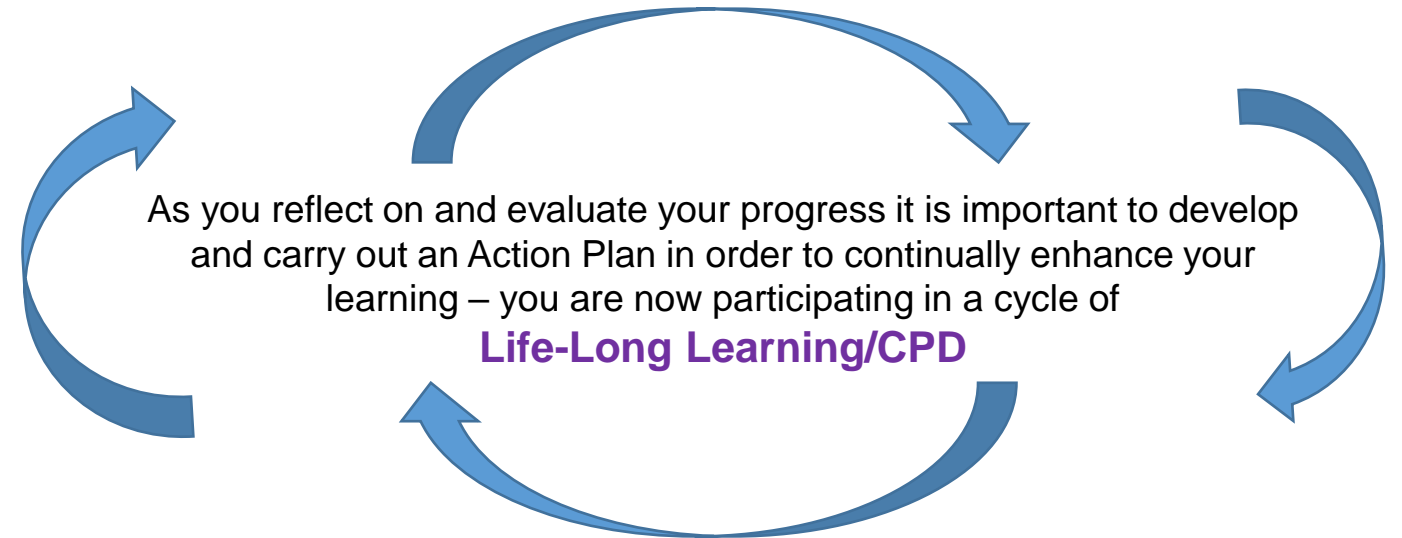
<p><b>DBS Check</b></p> <p>This is an important document which you may be required to produce for some placements, you should therefore keep it in a safe place.</p>	<p><b>Reporting of Accidents and Incidents</b></p> <p>Any accident or incident involving the learner must be reported using local documentation and a copy forwarded to the School of Health &amp; Life Sciences Placements Office.</p> <p>The School operates a <a href="#">Raising and Escalating Concerns</a> (Whistleblowing Procedure). The procedure identifies the processes to be followed by academic staff and the apprentice when a learner has a concern relating to the practice learning environment and / or standards of practice / care.</p>	<p><b>Lone Working</b></p> <p>Some placements require working with a degree of isolation e.g. community settings; however it is expected that a learner will practise with a level of supervision, negotiated with the Practice Educator, commensurate with their abilities and level of competence.</p> <p>See: <a href="#">Lone working policy for learners</a></p>
<p><b>Disability Issues</b></p> <p>It is the learner's responsibility to raise any disability issues that may affect their performance while undertaking a placement. If the apprentice thinks they need extra support they should arrange to discuss their needs with the University Disability Co-ordinator who will ensure that every attempt is made to give them the support they need to meet practice education standards.</p> <p>See: <a href="#">Student Life</a> services.</p>	<p><b>Assessment Forms</b></p> <p>Learners should retain copies of all your Assessment Forms (held within the your e-Portfolio) for future reference. These forms are reviewed by our external examiner and may be required when applying for registration overseas.</p>	<p><b>Travel</b></p> <p>Whilst on placement travelling between practice sites will be the apprentice's responsibility. If they intend to use their own vehicle they must have a full driving licence. The apprentice must inform their insurer and, if necessary, make suitable adjustments to their policy to cover work-related travelling. The learner must not transport service users and / or their carers in their own vehicle under any circumstances.</p>

## Practice Educator development

Following a placement block, take the opportunity to discuss your practice experience with your peers, line manager and or your named Link Academic Tutor.

As a Practice Educator you are encouraged to reflect on and evaluate your development by:

- Asking the learner for feedback
- Reflecting upon the placement – consider what went well, what may need addressing, how will you do this, do you need support?
- Visit the Practice support site
- Attend the Practice Supervision Skills training.
- If you have a specific need contact your Link Academic Tutor to arrange a bespoke workshop.



## Who do I contact if I need support?

The Course Leader for the BSc Dietetics (Apprenticeship) is **Cecile Jones**



The learner will be able to tell you who your Link Academic Tutor is as this is shared with learners via their virtual learning environment.

Link Academic Tutors normally meet with the apprentice and Practice Educator just after the half way formative assessment during Placement B and C. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity to discuss learner progress with both you and the apprentice.

Arrangements for additional academic and/or pastoral support can be made if the apprentice's performance indicates potential failure.

**Learners are required to check your University emails daily while on placement and respond to emails from your course team.**

**Learners must use your placement / NHS.net email account for placement business where applicable.**

**Further advice to Apprentices includes: Where face to face communication is not possible, patient identifiers with clinical / medical data should not be sent via non-secure methods including text messaging and answerphones. It is good practice to separate patient identifiers from clinical / medical data, i.e. send first email by secure means to identify patient (name and NHS / Date of Birth). Then send follow up email by secure means including patient initials and clinical / medical data. Please check information governance requirements of placement organisation.**

Practice Educators are supported by other members of the practice team who have completed Practice Supervision Skills Training. Training dates will be available on the regional partnership website.

If you are experiencing any difficulties or have concerns regarding the apprentice and / or placement, please discuss these with your line manager and if necessary your named Link Academic Tutor or Course Leader. Processes are in place should any difficulties or concerns arise that cannot be resolved by your Link Academic Tutor or Course Leader.

## Disclaimer

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