

Approved Higher and Further Educational Institutions (HEI/FEI) Student Access and management Policy

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Governance or Assurance Committee	Staff Governance
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CONSULTATION AND DISTRIBUTION RECORD	
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Consultation Process / Stakeholders:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Brief • NMAHP Professional Governance Group • AHP Heads of Profession Group • Advisory Committee structures • Strategic Learning Group • NMAHP Professional Governance Group
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CHANGE RECORD			
Date	Author	Change	Version No.
20.02.2026	M Russell	Inclusion of dental students in section indicating that policy does not apply.	V2.0
		Change from research and development department to Research and innovation Department	V2.0
		Change in term from 'Letter of Authorisation' to 'Letter of Authority'	

1. INTRODUCTION

NHS Lanarkshire welcome HEI/FEI students recognising that they:

- contribute to the care and experience of patients and public
- are valuable to practice improvement and development
- have great potential as future workforce
- are making a commitment to future health care within Lanarkshire.

This policy addresses requirements related to access and management of learning experiences undertaken by students within health care.

This policy does not apply to:

- Work experience or volunteering, both of which are governed by separate policies.
- Medical and Dental students – their access arrangements are managed via the West of Scotland Deanery
- Access that is solely related to the conduct of **approved health research** (as defined in the FAQ section). Access for research purposes is arranged via the national Research Passport process; information related to this can be obtained from NHS Lanarkshire's Research and Innovation Department.

2. AIM, PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES

The purpose of the policy is to provide all student learning experiences with robust access and management arrangements, ensuring that NHS Lanarkshire exercises their statutory duty of care to the people we serve.

Students include:

- HEI students
- FEI students

Who learn under the direction and supervision of a suitably prepared nominated person/s in NHS Lanarkshire as part of their education programme.

Students obtaining access to NHS Lanarkshire will be subject to the arrangements comparable with employees of NHS Lanarkshire. (Policies documented in reference section)

3. SCOPE

3.1 **Who is the Policy intended to Benefit or Affect?**

Patients and public served by NHS Lanarkshire
Approved HEI/FEI students (other than medical students as noted above)
Professional Leaders and Managers
NHS Lanarkshire Staff
Approved HEI/FEIs

3.2 Who are the Stakeholders?

NHS Lanarkshire
North and South Health and Social Care Partnerships
Approved HEI/FEIs

4. PRINCIPAL CONTENT

The principal content covers:

- 4.1 Practice Learning Agreement (PLA) with Approved Educational Institutions
- 4.2 Letters of Authorisation for Students
- 4.3 Letters of Access/ Honorary Contracts for Education Staff
- 4.4 Co-ordination of Practice-Based Learning Experiences

4.1. Practice Learning Agreement with Educational Institutions

Prior to any student accessing learning experiences within NHS Lanarkshire health care services, a Practice Learning Agreement (PLA) must be made with the Educational Institution with whom the student is registered. Both parties must comply with the arrangements detailed within the PLA.

The content of any newly developed PLA must be checked by the Central Legal Office and the Educational Institution's legal representatives prior to use as it covers conditions to be met by NHS Lanarkshire and the Educational Institution including liabilities, indemnities, health and safety, occupational health, Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) and other legal requirements such as Current Data Protection legislation, Freedom of Information and Intellectual Property. (A model PLA is available from the NMAHP Practice Development Centre)

4.2. Letters of Authority for Students

All students must co-sign with NHS Lanarkshire the Letters of Authority that underpin their personal access arrangements. Letters of Authority must highlight the scope and limits of students' access and actions required in the event of, for example, care concerns being identified or concerns in respect of the student. (A Model Letter of Authority is available from the NMAHP Practice Development Centre).

4.3. Letters of Access/ Honorary Contracts for Education Staff

Students undertake learning experiences as part of an educational programme. Staff from the student's Educational Institution may also require access to NHS Lanarkshire.

If the access does not include engagement in direct clinical activity with patients then a Letter of Access from NHS Lanarkshire is required for each named individual.

If direct clinical activity is involved an Honorary Contract is required.

Advice on process and delivery of Letter of Access or Honorary Contract can be obtained from Human Resources.

4.4. Coordination of Learning Experiences

All student learning experiences require co-ordination to ensure optimisation of learning and supervision with no compromise to patient care and experience.

Nationally agreed strategic education agreements will take primacy over other requests.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Service or Professional Lead (where appropriate) retains the responsibility for ensuring that students are supported throughout the duration of their placement/project. This includes delegating specific responsibilities and roles within their area (see Appendix 1 Arrangements that apply for NMAHP example).

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Staffing implications should be clearly documented within each areas arrangement document as discussed in section 5.

In addition to staffing implications to support students there will be administrative oversight to ensure agreements are in place.

NHS Lanarkshire requires to support any necessary preparation of its staff to support learners in its premises to meet any professional and/or organisational standards.

7. COMMUNICATION PLAN

All Directors of Services and Professional Lead for onward transmission throughout their areas

Staff Brief

Firstport

8. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT – Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of policy will be monitored through reviews as outlined within each area's PLA.

The policy will be formally reviewed every three years or beforehand if substantial change is required as a result of regulatory or legislative requirements.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This policy meets NHS Lanarkshire's EQIA



box)

10. SUMMARY or FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

- *Who does student refer to?*

A student refers to individuals studying within an educational institution including the term learner and apprentice.

- *What is an approved educational institution?*

An educational institution is an organisation that offers approved programmes of study including Higher Education Institutions: University and Further Education Institutions: College. These institutions are approved by the Scottish Government

- *What does a Practice Learning agreement (PLA) refer to?*

A PLA is a signed agreements the NHS has with education institutions regarding provision of practice based learning experiences for students, including:

- Memorandum of Agreement
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Practice-based Learning Partnership Agreement

- *What is approved health research?*

Approved Medical Research is defined within the UK Data protection Act (2018 part 2 chapter 2 section 19 (4)) as

“medical research carried out by a person who has approval to carry out that research from:

- a NHS Research Ethics Committee (NHS REC) recognised by the HRA, or
- another relevant NHS body (as may be appointed for the purpose of assessing the ethics of research involving individuals), or
- a research institution (as defined in Income Tax Act 2003)”

11. REFERENCES

NHS Lanarkshire polices available: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC): <https://www.nmc.org.uk/>

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC): <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/>

National Health Service Education for Scotland (NES):

<https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/>

Data protection act (2018):

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/section/19>

12. CHECKLIST

To be sent to Corporate policies:-

Copy of completed policy
Copy of EQIA
Copy of assurance process document for all policies
Copy of fast-track document if applicable

NHS Lanarkshire take care to ensure personal information is only accessible to authorised people. Our staff have a legal and contractual duty to keep personal health information secure, and confidential. In order to find out more about current data protection legislation and how we process your information, please visit the Data Protection Notice on NHS Lanarkshire's website at www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk or ask a member of staff for a copy of our Data Protection Notice

Appendix 1

Arrangements that apply for NMAHP

The Executive Director of NMAHPs is the named executive lead for student practice-based learning experiences within NMAHP services of NHS Lanarkshire and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate access and management arrangements are in place and that these arrangements are monitored, reviewed and reported within the management and governance systems of NHS Lanarkshire.

The Director of NMAHP Practice Development is the named strategic lead and is responsible for ensuring management and governance arrangements are in place, monitored, reviewed and reported within the management and governance systems of NHS Lanarkshire.

In particular the Director of NMAHP Practice Development has responsibility for ensuring Practice Learning Agreements are in place with all relevant educational institutions; students co-sign 'Letters of Authority'; educational staff have Letter of Access or Honorary Contract status; practice-based learning experiences within NMAHP services are coordinated; regular meetings are convened or contacts maintained with Education Institutions to monitor and review Agreements and an annual report is provided on all related activity.

The Senior Practitioner Practice Education lead and the Practice Education team, are operationally responsible for ensuring that NMAHP areas utilised for practice-based learning experiences meet the required standards; student access to practice learning experiences is appropriately coordinated; required arrangements are in place for student learning and assessment during placements; NMAHPs supervising and assessing students are appropriately prepared, updated and supported; and any care concerns raised by students follow due process.

Senior NMAHP Staff are responsible for ensuring that the Director of NMAHP Practice Development is notified of any matter of significance relevant to student practice-based learning experiences within NMAHP services; NMAHP services meet required standards for NMAHP students; sufficient numbers of NMAHPs are enabled to supervise and assess students having undertaken the required preparation and updating; the Nursing and Midwifery PEF or AHP PEL service is notified of service or personnel change or development that may impact on student practice-based learning experiences and all NMAHPs comply with this policy.

NMAHPs are responsible for complying with this policy; notifying the Practice Education team of any matters of concern in respect of practice - based learning experiences at the earliest opportunity; providing a clinical learning environment in line with NHS Education for Scotland Quality Standards for Practice Placements; and ensuring that students are welcomed into NHS Lanarkshire, receiving the highest quality of learning experience required of their programme.