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| Institute of Health and Allied Professions  |
| Information for Practice Assessors/Educators and Practice Supervisors of students on the Independent Prescriber Course  |
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# Introduction

 This document is designed to support you in the role of Practice Supervisor and Practice

 Assessor or Practice Educator in supervising students to attain their Independent and

 Supplementary Prescribing for Non-medical Prescribers qualification.

The information contained in this document is to outline your responsibilities and role while also explaining the course structure and the assessments. You will be required to complete a learning contract with the student to ensure you are both clear on your roles and responsibilities.

The course is accessed as part of the MSc in Advanced Practice or as a stand-alone course. The course runs over six months during which the student will attend university days (1 day a week) and will be required to undertake practice under supervision.  The course is assessed through four different elements in the duration of the course.

The NMC code and HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics are integral to safe and effective prescribing practice. The standards are foregrounded at the start of the prescribing course, and embedded throughout the on programme learning and assessment strategy. Students will therefore be required to clearly demonstrate they can apply the Code and SCPEs to prescribing practice. All the learning outcomes and assessments have been fully mapped to the RPS and AHPF competencies and reflect the NMC code and the AHP SCPEs.

The course is open to nurses and midwives and approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and allied health professionals (accredited by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).  Students are expected to identify the members of staff who will be their Practice Assessor and Practice Supervisor or Practice Educator. Students who are registered with the NMC will have a Practice Supervisor and a Practice Assessor. Students who are registered with the HCPC will have a Practice Educator. For HCPC access to a practice supervisor is also beneficial – see more details below.

Practice Supervisors / Assessors, and Practice Educators will have regular supervision meetings with the student and will document progress towards achievement of the outcomes in the student’s Practice Assessment Document (PAD).  They will also have contact with the academic assessor from the university.

Please contact the module lead sarah.taylor@ntu.ac.uk if you have any questions.

Staff who are new to the role of NMC Practice Assessor or Practice Supervisor will be given access to the regional Practice Supervisor and Assessor resources to assist in preparing for the role and further specific support can be given as required through the course. This is in line with the NMC [Standards to Support Student Learning and Assessment](https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards-for-education-and-training/standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/) (NMC, 2018)

#  Course Entry Criteria

For nurses and midwives (NMC registered)

* As outlined by the NMC standards, the student must be a registered nurse or midwife with the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to undertake the programme.  We recommend a year post-registration experience (or part time equivalent) to allow for the consolidation of pre-registration learning.
* The student must provide evidence of ability to study at Degree Level 6 with a good command of English and numeracy skills.
* The student must have an approved medical or non-medical prescriber as a Practice Assessor who has agreed to provide supervision, support, and assessment. The Practice Assessor will need to provide the student with opportunities to develop competencies in prescribing during their supervised hours.
* The student must have an approved prescriber as a Practice Supervisor to guide them through the practical elements of the course. The student, the Practice Supervisor and Practice Assessor will be required to sign a learning contract.

Allied Health Professionals (HCPC registered)

* The student must be registered with the HCPC in one of the relevant allied health professions with the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to undertake the programme.  We recommend a year post-registration experience (or part time equivalent) to allow for the consolidation of your pre-registration learning.
* The student must have an approved prescriber as a Practice Educator who has agreed to provide supervision, support, and assessment.  The practice educator will need to provide the student with opportunities to develop competencies in prescribing during their supervised hours.  The student and practice assessor will be required to sign a learning contract.
* The student should be working at an advanced clinical level.

**These criteria may change in line with guidance from the professional body.**

Additional Requirements.

1. The course requires that the student works in an area where they will be expected to and have the opportunity to prescribe.
2. The student must have the support of their employer to complete the course.
3. The student must have an identified Practice Supervisor/Educator who is able to provide a range of opportunities for learning and feedback to assist you to become a safe prescriber.
4. The placement area will need to have an audit of the learning environment, to determine suitability for the achievement of the course requirements. If an existing audit is not available for the placement area, then one will be completed in collaboration between NTU staff and the staff in the placement area. Audits will be filed in PARE software as part of the Midlands HEI audit collaboration project.

# Assessment and supervision in practice.

**Practice Supervisor**

A registered health professional who supports the student and serves as a role model for safe and effective practice.  A practice supervisor is essential for a nurse or midwife and recommended for allied health professionals.  For nurses and midwives, the supervisor must be a registered nurse, midwife or doctor or registered health professional who is an active prescriber, works in the same clinical area as the student, is a role model for safe and effective practice, has up to date knowledge of prescribing skills in the clinical area, is able to commit time (90 hours) to supervise and support the student.  This supervision can take various shapes as outlined in the module handbook. They will support and supervise students, giving feedback to them and to the practice assessor on their achievements.

A student may have more than one supervisor.

**Practice Assessor**

Any qualified prescriber who assesses student practice learning.  They must be a registered healthcare professional and an experienced prescriber with suitable equivalent qualifications for the programme the student is undertaking. **For nurses and midwives, the practice assessor and the practice supervisor must be two separate individuals who will work together to assess progress in meeting the learning outcomes.**

The assessor may be a medical prescriber or a non-medical prescriber. They must be an active prescriber who does not necessarily need to work in the same clinical area as the student, and who is a role model for safe and effective practice, The practice assessor must have up to date knowledge of prescribing skills in the area and have time to assess and support the student.

The role of the practice assessor is to assess the student’s competence in practice.  The practice assessor will provide regular support, feedback and advice on the student’s progress and will consult with the practice supervisor to do so.  The practice assessor needs to confirm, at the end of the course, that the student meets the competencies of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) safely.  The practice assessor will be the same individual throughout the course.

In order to undertake the role of practice assessor an individual should:

* Make and record in the students’ Practice assessment document objective, evidenced-based assessments on conduct, proficiency, and achievement.
* Receive ongoing support from the employer/practice area in order to participate in the practice learning of students.
* Support learning in line with the NMC/HCPC Standards for prescribing and the RPS competency framework

**Practice Educator**

For allied health professionals, they will be required to identify a Practice Educator who satisfies the following criteria as stated by the HCPC. They will act as Practice Supervisor and Practice Assessor.

They will:

* Be a registered practitioner in a GP surgery, OR is a specialist registrar, clinical assistant or consultant within the NHS OR an experienced non-medical prescriber.
* Agree to provide supervision, support, and shadowing opportunities for the student.
* Be familiar with the HCPC requirements and the need to achieve the learning outcomes.
* Have three years recent clinical experience for a group of patients or service users in the relevant field of practice.
* Have the support of the employing organisation.

Prospective practice educators will be asked to send a CV and supporting statement demonstrating how they meet the DPP competencies. This is then assessed by the course lead and further information sought if required. If a prospective educator is not able to demonstrate suitability, an alternative will need to be sought. If a change of practice educator is necessary part way through the course, the new practice educator will need to follow the same approval process.

**Academic assessor**

All students undertaking the prescribing programme will be supported by an Academic Assessor (AA). The academic assessor will be an employee of the Institute of Health and Allied Professions department at NTU. The role of the academic assessor involves confirming the student’s achievement against the proficiencies and being the University contact point for their practice learning. They will therefore regularly be reviewing the students’ progress in practice as recorded in their Practice Assessment Document. This will identify contact details for the PA, PS and the Academic Assessor.

If the practice assessor and/or practice supervisor have concerns regarding the progress of the student towards the prescribing proficiencies, the academic assessor is a key point of contact to discuss the students learning and achievement.

The first steps to being a PA or PS for a student on the independent prescribing course include;

* Read and confirm that you comply with the  [Royal Pharmaceutical Society Competency Framework for Designated Prescribing Practitioners.](https://www.rpharms.com/Portals/0/RPS%20document%20library/Open%20access/Professional%20standards/DPP%20Framework/DPP%20competency%20framework%20Dec%202019.pdf?ver=2019-12-18-150746-160) This outlines the competency level required to act as an assessor or supervisor.
* If you are satisfied you meet these criteria, you will be asked to confirm this when you sign the learning contract. At this point NTU confirm acceptance of the student onto the programme.

The academic team will set some virtual drop in sessions for Practice Assessors and Supervisors throughout the course which will provide support if required.  You will be contacted via email with details.

The academic team will be able to provide support to prescribers who have not previously acted as a Practice Assessor for non-medical prescribing students in order to support the development of this role.   Please contact sarah.taylor@ntu.ac.uk for further information if required.

# Academic Assessment

The student is required to undertake four summative assessments throughout the course

1. A numeracy exam in week 3 of the course. This has to be passed with a 100% mark and is graded as a pass/fail.
2. A pharmacology exam which is undertaken in week 20 of the course. This requires an 80% pass mark and is graded as a pass/fail.
3. A case based professional discussion which is undertaken in week 23 of the course. This accounts for 40% of the course mark.
4. A practice assessment document (PAD) which is completed throughout the course and submitted in the final week. This aligns with the course learning outcomes and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society competencies. It accounts for 60% of the course mark. There will be clear guidance to the Practice Assessor/Educator, the Practice Supervisor and the student early in the course as to what evidence we expect to see within the PAD to demonstrate the competence of the student.

**Concerns and contacts**

If either the practice supervisor, practice assessor or the practice educator have concerns regarding the student’s progress or safety, they should contact the NTU team, initially the student’s academic assessor if possible.  We will also host regular online drop-in sessions which you can access if required for support.

**Contacts**

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