What is a Skills Diary?

The skills diary is for adult, child and learning disability students only. This is a diary for the student to keep as an on-going record of their achievement and experience in skills linked to the NMC standards for pre-registration nurse education Essential Skills Cluster. It is the student’s responsibility to record these skills and use the diary to highlight areas for development. The skills diary is in the practice experience workbooks in PebblePad and can be edited by the student on Pebble+ and reviewed by the mentor, link lecturer or personal supervisor on ATLAS.

The skills diary is a memory jogger for the student. It does not confer competence in these skills and while the mentor can review their student’s skills diary and use it as part of the assessment process, as the mentor you still need to make an assessment of the students’ skills, and appropriately delegate and supervise every time the student performs these skills on a patient.

The Service Improvement Project October 2011

Information for mentors supporting Oct 11 3rd stage nurse students in Practice Experience 5

What’s this all about?
The students in the BSc Nursing begin their final year on October 28th 2013. At this point they commence their ‘dissertation’ which will take the form of a Service Improvement Project. The student will work on this project from the start of practice experience 5 through to a submission date in May 2014.

What do the students need from you as a mentor?
The overall aim of the service improvement project is to instigate a change in practice identified in collaboration with service users. This might be tricky for a student without your experience and support to help identify what that change might be whether it would work and whether it would be useful. So any project should be negotiated and agreed with you as mentor and your service manager. The student will present you with a plan of the project for you to sign. The student should develop a negotiated learning contract detailing contents of proposed service improvement project (1500 words) 2nd December 2013.

Where can I get support or more information?
The student should arrange a tripartite meeting with you, them and the link lecturer as early in the practice experience as possible. In addition to this each student will have a named supervisor for the project and a personal supervisor who can also help.

Preparing to Care Project

Academics at the Universities of Hull, York and York St John have recently secured funding from Yorkshire and Humber Health Education England for a collaborative research project. The study has been commissioned to explore the government’s response to the Francis Report (2010) and their focus on the lack of ‘compassion’ and ‘care’ values with front line staff. The current Government have tasked the newly established Health Education England with a number of measures designed to transform health education training, including assessing the caring values of all new NHS-funded trainees; pilot schemes whereby new recruits complete one year as health care assistants before acceptance onto a nursing degree course; and increasing the length of time students spend on practice placements. The study adopts a mixed methods longitudinal approach, and aims for a range of perspectives including health care students, academic educators and practice mentors, and will investigate whether there is any evidence to substantiate Government claims that students recruited into NHS-funded training are indeed lacking in ‘caring’ values.

You as a mentor working with the University of York may be contacted and invited to participate in a focus group.
A sign-off mentor (SOM) is expected to review previous practice assessment documentation to ensure any concerns raised earlier in the programme have been appropriately addressed. This does not mean the SOM questions the judgement of previous mentors, just that they are satisfied that all appropriate assessments have been made.

The SOM must have reviewed the documentation BEFORE the student goes on elective in order to identify which areas of practice/outcomes the student may need to repeat or areas in which they need to satisfy the SOM they have met the outcomes.

A sign-off mentor reviewing a student’s practice assessment documentation noticed that a concern was raised during a second year placement. It was documented that the student did not always recognise and appropriately report signs of deterioration in a patient’s condition. The student had not failed the placement but the personal supervisor and student had identified this as an area in need of specific attention in the next placement. The SOM then looked through subsequent assessments and noted that no further problems of this nature had been identified and mentor comments suggested that the student had adequately addressed this issue.

During the SOMs own supervision and assessment of the student in the final placement they make sure, through observation, questioning and discussion, that this is no longer a concern about the student’s performance. For further clarification please see link lecturers and/or PLF/PPF's.

**Example**

**Medicines Management Calculations**

How does this happen in practice and why?

The NMC (2010) have said that Medicine calculations need to be summatively assessed in practice, and that the summative assessment needs to be directly related to the practice area in which the student is practising at the time of the assessment. This is because the NMC have directed the responsibility to practitioners to pass or fail the student within the practice setting.

In Pebblepad this is under the CAP document Medicines Management and needs to be completed every placement. There are six calculations to be set each time. All six need to be passed every placement. The calculations set need to reflect the type of calculations needed for that area as part of the care that is delivered. The complexity of the calculations will need to be set to suit the students’ stage of training and level of attainment, and can be set late into a practice experience in order for initial learning to take place alongside the mentor and other practitioners.

The Department of Health Sciences at the University of York will continue its extensive educational programme for registered practitioners from January 2014 with a wide range of short courses and study days suitable for primary care, secondary care, mental healthcare, midwifery, public health and leadership skills development. Visit [http://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/cpd/#tab-2](http://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/cpd/#tab-2) to see what’s coming up and how to apply.

There is a new support line for mentors supporting students using Pebblepad—01904 321540. Please note you may have to leave a message with your details and phone number as this is not a 24/7 line. You will be directed to choose one of four options:

**Option 1:** If you have forgotten your username or password or your email address has changed. If the student you are mentoring changes, or you are picking up the mentor role for additional students allocated to your area (eg if their original mentor is away from work and you need access to complete some aspects of the students portfolio).

**Option 2:** If you are a mentor and require further information or support regarding training on PebblePad.

**Option 3:** If you require advice regarding the process of documenting practice assessment using the pebblepad tool, spoke experiences, calculations and NMC competencies that your link lecturer cannot resolve.

**Option 4:** If you are a mentor and you have problems opening the website, please direct to your organisation’s IT support in the first instance. If technical queries arise within PebblePad, please choose this option.

For advice/help in the first instance please access the troubleshooting section on our Practice Education Support website at [http://tiny.cc/pebblehelp](http://tiny.cc/pebblehelp). Students should direct issues to their personal supervisors in the first instance. If they are unavailable, please contact Student Information Service on 01904 321321.

The base and spoke handbook has been updated and can be found via the following link: [http://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/practice-ed-support/current-mentor/nursing/](http://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/practice-ed-support/current-mentor/nursing/)