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Student Selection – Guidance for Placement Providers

Background

The PSI has set out that the placements in this new programme are designed to be workplace-based learning experiences which are overseen by the Schools of Pharmacy with the underpinning philosophy being that, while on placements, programme participants remain as students. The PSI has also stated that the shift from a one-year internship to an integrated workplace-based learning model brings the placements under the remit and supervision of the Schools of Pharmacy and that this is intended to facilitate the delivery of quality placements which protect and promote the educational experience of learners. As students undertake statutory placements, their primary role on placement is that of a student and the process to select a student for placement should reflect this.

Selecting a Student

Placement providers will have the opportunity to review the CVs and Cover Letters of their shortlisted students. Placement providers may choose to proceed in one of the following ways:

Immediately Offer a Placement

Placement providers may choose to present an immediate placement offer to a particular student. This situation may arise for several reasons:

- The placement provider may be happy that the information provided by a particular student is sufficient for them to select a student.
- The placement provider may not have the time and/or resources to engage with some or all students, from their shortlist, to determine which student might best suit the placement.
- The placement provider may have been assigned a student by APPEL in the past and is happy to receive a student without additional engagement.

Undertake a Selection Process before Offering the Placement

Placement providers may choose to engage with some or all shortlisted students to determine which student might best suit the placement. This engagement can be informal or structured:

Informal Selection Process

A placement provider may choose to engage informally with student(s). This may take the form of a short telephone chat, a brief chat via video call or they may ask a student to call into the training establishment for a brief introduction. In this situation, the placement provider has decided not to conduct a formal, structured selection process but would like an opportunity to meet/speak briefly with a student(s) to determine if they would be a good fit for that placement.



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Structured Selection Process

A number of placement providers have expressed a desire to conduct a formal, structured selection process.

Selection Process Methods

Where possible, training establishments are asked to consider the use of telephone, video call or similar tools for this selection process. Students may live or be at a university which is a considerable distance from your training establishment. This may help limit costs incurred by students and reduce the amount of university time missed.

Purpose of the Selection Process

Training Establishments are asked to provide students with activities to complete during their placement which will support them to develop competence in line with the PSI Core Competency Framework. Before engaging in the selection process, training establishments should consider what activities are likely to be included in this placement – your placement description will be a good guide. The purpose of the structured selection process should then be to determine if the student:

1. possesses the skills, abilities, knowledge, competence and attributes required to complete these activities with the support and supervision that will be provided during the placement
2. would fit well within the team that will be supporting and supervising their placement
3. is likely to find the placement a positive learning experience
4. will have their development goals met during the placement

Selection Process Questions

In this section, we provide some examples of the types of questions which would be considered appropriate when selecting a student. Please note that the list is not exhaustive. Therefore, when selecting or asking questions, training establishments should be mindful that the purpose of the selection process is to select a student for an experiential learning placement and not as an additional member of staff for the Training Establishment. Students should be supernumerary to the Training Establishments resources.

Examples of Appropriate Questions

- Why would you like to do your placement at our training establishment?
- What do you know about our organisation?
- What skills do you possess that might make you a 'good fit' for our organisation?
- What experiences gained during your previous placement may be useful on placement at our training establishment?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- What kind of people do you get on well with?
- What unique qualities or abilities would you bring to this placement?



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- What are you looking for from a placement?
- Describe a situation in which you.....?
- Do you prefer to train alone or in a team?
- Can you give me an idea of some activities you would like to do while on placement?
- Do you prefer fast- or slow-paced training environments?
- How much support would you like to have during your placement?
- Tell me about a time that you failed at something, and what you did afterwards.
- Why did you choose to study pharmacy?

Examples of Inappropriate Questions

Would you be willing to spend two days each week on our cosmetic counter?

Student placements are an opportunity for students to practise the behaviours of the PSI's Core Competency Framework. They are required to gain sufficient competence in these behaviours to attain a minimum of level 3 in relevant competencies by the end of the placement. Therefore, all activities undertaken by the student should be related to behaviours described in the PSI Core Competency Framework.

Would you be willing to change your placement hours to cover late nights and weekends?

Students' timetables are set by APPEL. Students will be on placement Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:00-18:00, as a continuous 8.5 hours block, with 1 hour lunch break and students must be available to undertake online academic activities on a Wednesday.