

2nd -Year Pharmacy Experiential Learning Placements 2021

Supervisor FAQ on operational changes and considerations due to COVID-19

The Schools of Pharmacy, PSI and HSE, have decided that 2nd –year placements will go ahead, in line with current public health guidance, to enable students to fulfil the academic requirements of completing an experiential learning placement in the 2nd - year of their academic studies.

Pharmacy students are considered as trainee healthcare workers. Their education and training are regarded as essential; therefore, they will be able to attend their experiential learning placements around the country.

APPEL is cognisant that COVID-19 will have a significant impact on the experiential learning placements due to take place in the coming weeks. Our priorities are to ensure that your health and wellbeing and that of the team within your Training Establishment, your family, and friends are protected as well as the health and wellbeing of the student.

In acknowledgement of the effect that COVID-19 may have on the student, on their Supervisor and the Training Establishment, APPEL and the three Schools of Pharmacy have answered the following frequently asked questions (FAQ) to help explain any changes that are being implemented to facilitate the placements during this pandemic. If you have any questions arising from this document, please contact the APPEL office at ops@appel.ie

Q. What are the dates of the 2nd -year experiential learning placements for 2021?

A. Students will be on their experiential learning placements on the following dates:

- UCC: 11/01/21 - 22/01/21
- RCSI: 19/01/21 - 06/04/21
- TCD: 08/03/21 – 19/03/21

* Please note that some students returning to Ireland from other countries may need to restrict their movements for two weeks before the commencement of their placement.

Q. My student was abroad prior to their placement commencing. What are the requirements for these students before they begin their experiential learning placement?

A. Students who are returning to Ireland from another country before their placement commences may be required to restrict their movements. Students have been informed to return to Ireland no later than the dates below so that they are available to begin their placement as planned on the dates scheduled.

- UCC students – Sunday 27th December 2020
- RCSI students – Sunday 3rd January 2021
- TCD students – Sunday 21st February 2021

Q. Has the placement schedule changed for the placement period?

A. There is no change to the placement schedule for the placement period. Further information regarding the placement schedule can be found in the Supervisor handbook, which can be found on the APPEL website <https://www.appel.ie/resources/>

Q. Is there additional information that I should add to my induction and training plan due to the impact of COVID-19 on the experiential learning placement?

A. It is important, at the outset of the placement, to provide your student with a planned induction, which familiarises them with the practicalities of their new learning environment (some aspects of this could be delegated to other staff members). COVID-19 has introduced many changes to the workplace environment, which the student will be unfamiliar with and which should be included in the induction plan, for example:

- Training Establishment policies and procedures on social distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, wearing of face-masks, PPE, etc.
- Consider providing students with the below documentation, where applicable, for their review:

- SOPs
 - Health and Safety documentation
 - COVID-19 Protocols
 - Training Manual
 - Any other placement related paperwork
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- Ways of working, e.g. how handover occurs between teams if social distancing requires split teams.
 - Practices that have been implemented for COVID-19, but are not standard practices, e.g. the student may not be aware of the changes to prescription legislation, methods introduced to minimise patient contact.
 - Cultural and linguistic issues that need to be considered as part of the new ways of working, e.g. implications on face-to-face communication while maintaining social distancing and wearing PPE such as facemasks.
 - Hints and tips on how the student can fit into a new team.

More details on items to include in the student induction plan can be found in the Supervisor Handbook, and a Sample Induction Plan is provided on the resources page of the APPEL website. <https://www.appel.ie/resources/>

Q. Do I need to complete any additional documentation in consideration of the impact of COVID-19 on the placement?

A. No, there is no additional paperwork required to be completed by the Training Establishment or the Supervisor. No changes have been made to the Placement Agreement or the Accreditation documentation.

Q. What additional pre-placement preparation has my student completed in consideration of the impact of COVID-19 on the placement?

A. Students are required to complete the following additional activities in advance of starting their experiential learning placement:

1. Students must complete the following online courses available at www.hsland.ie

- a. Introduction to Infection Prevention and Control
 - b. Breaking the Chain of Infection
 - c. Hand Hygiene for Clinical Staff
 - d. Putting on and Taking off PPE in Acute Healthcare Settings
 - e. Putting on and Taking off PPE in Community Healthcare Settings
 - f. Infection Prevention and Control
 - g. What is Corona Virus
2. Students must review the following videos on the HPSC website in advance of commencing their placement.
- Correct donning and doffing of PPE on the HPSC website www.hpsc.ie
 - Review of the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Guidance, including IPC COVID-19 Guidance and educational videos on [www.HPSC.ie/infection control/](http://www.HPSC.ie/infection%20control/)
3. Additionally, students must read and understand the following documents and consult the following webpages:
- Guidance to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 infection in pharmacies <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/pharmacyguidance/>
 - The information provided by their University on COVID-19
 - <https://www.ucc.ie/en/studenthealth/flu/>
 - <https://www.rcsi.com/dublin/coronavirus/students>, or
 - <https://www.tcd.ie/about/coronavirus/>
4. Students will be obliged to download the “COVID Tracker Ireland” and to log in and update this tracker daily.
5. Students will also be required to log into the APPEL Virtual Learning Environment daily and record the following information:
- Record that they have no symptoms of COVID-19 before they go on placement

- Depending on their Training Establishment, they may need to record where they were on-site throughout the placement day: e.g. Dispensary, Ward X, etc. This may be required in the event of an IPC incident such as an outbreak.
 - Students can only be on placement at the appointed APPEL accredited Training Establishment. Please inform APPEL where a student needs to change their Training Establishment in advance of that change occurring.

Q. What is the process to be followed if a student develops signs of COVID-19 during placement?

A. If a student is at home when they develop [symptoms](#), they must not go into placement, and must not leave home. They must self-isolate and phone their GP or Student Health Services (info below). Students must also contact their Supervisor and Practice Educator.

If a student develops symptoms when they are at the Training Establishment, they must inform their Supervisor and must leave the site immediately. They should self-isolate in their home and contact their GP or Student Health Services, from home.

Q. What support will the Supervisor receive from APPEL during the 2nd -year placements?

A. Practice Educators and the APPEL office will be available to respond to any questions or queries that you may have regarding the placement. The APPEL website has relevant information and resources, and APPEL will email important updates and information as it arises.

The APPEL Team Contact Details

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