

## 5<sup>th</sup>-Year Placements 2022 – Frequently Asked Questions for Students

The 2022 5<sup>th</sup>-year placements will go ahead, in line with current public health guidance, to enable all students to fulfil their statutory requirements of completing an eight-month placement during the 5<sup>th</sup> year of their Pharmacy degree.

Planning for your placement within your Schools of Pharmacy and APPEL has continued at pace throughout the past few months, with your health and wellbeing together with that of your Senior Preceptors, placement teams and patients being the primary concern. Bearing this in mind, some additional requirements are being asked of every student to ensure the safe operation of these placements.

We have compiled the following frequently asked questions (FAQ) to help explain any changes implemented to facilitate the placements during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and further explain the additional requirements. **These requirements are outlined in this document and must be completed (please see the checklist attached in Appendix 3).** If you do not complete these actions by the specified date, it may jeopardise your participation in the placement.

If you have any questions arising from this document, please contact the APPEL office or your Practice Educator.

### Q. What are the dates of the 5<sup>th</sup> Year placements for 2022?

A. Students will attend their experiential learning placements from **Tuesday 4 January – Friday 26 August 2022**. You are required to complete 22.5 hrs only during the first week of placement.

**Q. I am due to undertake foreign travel before my placement commences. Is there anything that I need to be aware of?**

Or

**Q. As an international student, I am returning to Ireland before my placement commences. Is there anything that I need to be aware of?**

A. Please see the updated Government advice on travel as updated on the 21 October 2021 [here](#). Students are advised to monitor the relevant government websites for travel advice and guidance as these are subject to change. Further information concerning travel is due to be published in the coming days.

Please consult [this webpage](#) for further information concerning foreign travel. Please contact your Practice Educator(s) by the **30 November** if you have any queries about existing travel plans.

**Q. Is it compulsory for me to go on placement at this time?**

A. Completion of placement is required to progress through your Pharmacy degree; however, we understand some of you may have concerns. Please contact your Practice Educator(s) with any specific queries that you wish to discuss, and they will address these with you on a case-by-case basis.

If any of the below criteria apply to you, you may not be in a position to start your placement as expected on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January. **Please contact your Practice Educator as soon as possible if any of the below apply to you:**

- If you have an underlying health condition that would put you at higher risk of serious illness, should you contract COVID-19. The HSE advice is available [here](#). If in doubt, please contact your GP or University/College Student Health for advice (details can be found below). Please contact your Practice Educator by **30 November 2021**, and they will advise you of the processes to be followed according to your HEI policies.
- If you share accommodation with a member of a [vulnerable group](#) and are concerned, please contact your GP or Student Health for advice.

## Q. What are the key placement dates for the 5<sup>th</sup>-year placements in 2022?

A. The placement dates are as follows:

- Student on placement: **4 January – 26 August 2022**
- Formative assessment date: Completed by the end of week 12 (**31 March 2022**)
- Summative assessment date: Completed by the end of week 30 (**31 July 2022**)
- Focused training period (if required): **2 - 26 August**
  - Please note that the placement continues until **26 August 2022**, whether a focused training period is required or not.

## Q. What is the student timetable for the placement period?

A. The student timetable is flexible and adaptable to accommodate the needs of the Senior Preceptor, Training Establishment and the student.

- You are required to complete 30 hrs of placement time each week.
- This time on placement can be completed from Monday – Friday between 8 am and 6 pm.
- You must be provided with at least one-half day each week between Monday and Friday comprising no less than 4hrs to allow you to complete your online academic modules.
- There is **no requirement** for you to be off placement on a Wednesday (as was the case previously).
- The placement timetable should be agreed upon between you and your Senior Preceptor:
  - Ideally, you would be given the same timetable each week; however, this may not always be possible.
  - You must be given adequate notice of your timetabled placement hours.
  - Your placement hours must occur over one continuous period on any given day.
- You must be provided with appropriate breaks in accordance with legislation.

Flexibility in the timetable has been introduced in response to COVID-19 and also as a result of student and Senior Preceptor feedback. As a result of the added flexibility, it is important to be aware that placement hours may be adjusted to suit your needs and the needs of the Training

Establishment. If you are concerned about your placement hours, please contact your Practice Educator.

### Q. Why can I now be on placement on a Wednesday?

A. To be flexible, adaptable, and ensure operational effectiveness across all Training Establishments, the APPEL Board decided that the online academic modules would move to an asynchronous format for this year's 5<sup>th</sup>-year placement. Therefore, students are not required to be online in unison on a Wednesday afternoon.

Further information regarding your Online Academic Modules will be provided to you by your module coordinators at your Pre-Placement Preparation Workshop – see dates below.

- **UCC – 30 November 2021**
- **RCSI - 7 December 2021**
- **Trinity - 18 November 2021**

Your Practice Educators will be in contact with you by email concerning the Pre-Placement Preparation Workshop later in the term.

### Q. Will the assessment of the placement be the same as usual?

A. Yes, there is no change to the assessment of the placement. At the end of the 5<sup>th</sup>-year placement, it is intended that students will be able to demonstrate the required level of competency in the relevant behaviours in the PSI's Core Competency Framework. Students are assessed against all six domains of the PSI Core Competency Framework (CCF).

### Q. Are remote experiential placements permissible for the 5<sup>th</sup> Year experiential learning placement?

A. No. The eight-month placement undertaken in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the course must take place "*at the premises*" (See SI 377/2014).

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

A. Yes, additional documentation and pre-placement preparation must be completed in advance of you starting your placement due to the impact of COVID-19 on the placement.

1. In addition to the Student Placement Agreement, students will be required to sign a **COVID-19 Supplemental Student Undertaking/Declaration (Appendix 1)** and review the **Personal Support Plan Questionnaire (Appendix 2)**.
2. All students must complete the following online courses in Infection Prevention and Control before beginning their placement. You are required to complete these courses by both your University and the Chief Clinical Officer (CCO) of the HSE. We are aware that you completed these courses last year prior to your 4<sup>th</sup> Year placements. However, these courses must be completed again in advance of your 5<sup>th</sup> Year placement and are required to be reviewed on an annual basis. These courses are available at <https://www.hseland.ie>. Please carefully follow the instructions on the site. Students must create an account on the site and register as “volunteer”.
  - **AMRIC Introduction to Infection Prevention and Control**
  - **AMRIC Basics of Infection Prevention and Control**
  - **AMRIC Standard and Transmission Based Precautions**
  - **AMRIC Hand Hygiene**
  - **Putting on and Taking off PPE in Acute Healthcare Settings**
  - **Putting on and Taking off PPE in Community Healthcare Settings**
3. You will need to confirm to APPEL and your School of Pharmacy that these courses have been completed by signing the **COVID-19 Supplemental Student Undertaking/Declaration** and submitting the certificates provided when these courses are completed.
  - a. Please note the certificates are available on a separate tab on the web page when the courses are completed.

- b. Do not send the documents as links to Google Drive –we do not have permission to open it.
  - c. If possible, send the images as JPEG, PNG or PDF. Other formats are often not supported.
  - d. If possible, please edit the file names to the name of the course when you are saving them. This will help you to attach the correct files and significantly speeds up the process for the APPEL Operations Team, who are processing this documentation on behalf of your School of Pharmacy.
  - e. We will not send any confirmation emails. If you do not hear from us after sending these documents in, you can assume that everything has been submitted correctly.
4. The following resources are available on the HPSC website and need to be reviewed by students before commencing your placement.
- Review of videos on correct donning and doffing of PPE on the HPSC website <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/ppe/>
  - Review of the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Guidance, including IPC COVID-19 Guidance and educational videos on <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/videoresourcesforipc/>
5. Additionally, students must read and understand the following documents and consult the following web pages:
- 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 your University on COVID-19
    - <https://www.ucc.ie/en/studenthealth>
    - <https://www.rcsi.com/dublin/coronavirus/students>, or

- <https://www.tcd.ie/about/coronavirus/>

6. Students will also be obliged to download the “[COVID Tracker Ireland](#)” and log in and update this tracker daily.
7. You will also be required to log into the APPEL VLE or your HEI COVID-19 app daily and record the following information:
  - Record that you had no symptoms of COVID-19 before you attended your placement
  - If your Training Establishment is a HSE site, e.g. hospital, addiction services clinic, you must record where you were on-site throughout your placement day: e.g. Dispensary, Ward X, etc.
    - Further information will be provided to you regarding this requirement to record this information on the APPEL VLE/ HEI COVID-19 app in advance of your placement on the pre-placement preparation day.
    - In addition to the above, your training site may have additional specific requirements such as logs etc., which you will be required to complete.

### Q. What if I have been unwell before starting placement?

A. Students who have been unwell either generally or with COVID-19 [symptoms](#) in the 14 days prior to placement should follow [HSE advice](#) and will need to contact their GP or University/College Student Health for advice. You must also contact your Practice Educator.

Students who displayed any of the COVID-19 symptoms must have followed [HSE guidance](#) of 10 day self-isolation from the first onset of symptoms and be five days free of fever before starting placement.

## Q. What if I develop signs of COVID-19 during placement?

A. If you are at home when you develop [symptoms](#), do not go into placement and do not leave home. You must self-isolate and phone your GP or Student Health Services (info below). You must also contact your Senior Preceptor and Practice Educator.

If you are at your placement site when you develop symptoms, you must inform your Senior Preceptor and leave the site immediately. You should return home alone and not use public transport. You should self-isolate in your home and contact your GP or Student Health Services from home.

### UCC Student Health

Telephone: 021-4902311  
Address: Student Health Department, Ardpark, College Road, Cork  
Website: [www.ucc.ie/en/studenthealth](http://www.ucc.ie/en/studenthealth)

### RCSI Student Health

Telephone: 01-4022300  
Address: Mercer's Medical Centre, Stephen Street Lower, Dublin 2  
Website: [www.mercersmedicalcentre.com](http://www.mercersmedicalcentre.com)

### TCD Student Health

Telephone: 01-8961591 or 01-8961556  
Address: College Health Centre, House 47, Trinity College, Dublin 2  
Website: [www.tcd.ie/collegehealth](http://www.tcd.ie/collegehealth)

## Q. Where can I get accurate and up to date advice on how to protect myself and others while on placement?

A. Please adhere to local guidance provided by your Senior Preceptor and Training Establishment in relation to:



- Social distancing
  - Use of PPE
  - Health and Safety Protocols – laundering outfits, personal hygiene, restricting your movement if you are a close contact of a person with COVID-19.
- ❖ You must check your emails and communications regularly for information from your School and University throughout your placement period as the situation has the potential to change rapidly. This information can be found at the following links:
- <https://www.ucc.ie/en/studenthealth> and
  - <https://www.rcsi.com/dublin/coronavirus/reopening> and
  - <https://www.tcd.ie/about/coronavirus/>
- ❖ For updated health information on COVID-19, please see the [Health Protection Surveillance Centre](#) (HPSC) and [the HSE](#) websites. We strongly advise that all students read and familiarise themselves with this guidance and keep abreast of the most up to date information available at all times.
- ❖ The Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IloP) has a dedicated COVID-19 information hub for pharmacists <https://iiop.ie/content/covid-hub>.
- ❖ For updated travel information on COVID-19, please see the [DFA Travel Advice](#).
- ❖ Updates from the Department of Health can be found [here](#).
- ❖ Updates from the PSI can be found [here](#).
- ❖ The HPSC has published guidance to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in pharmacies. The guidance can be found [here](#).
- ❖ A COVID-19 HSE Clinical Guidance and Evidence repository are available [here](#). This site provides a national, easily accessible source of clinical guidance and the latest research evidence to equip the clinical community in Ireland to respond to COVID-19. This also contains a specific section on pharmacy and drugs management and will be a particularly useful resource to all of you in your experiential learning placements.
- ❖ The HRB National Drugs Library is also collating clinical and patient care research and harm reduction resources related to COVID-19, and this information can be found [here](#). There are several recently published papers [here](#), and this website is a beneficial resource for all students in sourcing information on COVID-19 matters from mental health, smoking, grieving, harm reduction etc.

- ❖ Information on “Communication skills for staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)” can be found [here](#).

**Q. In circumstances where I am unable to go on placement due to a requirement to restrict my movements or self-isolate, how will this impact my placement?**

A. Where you are required to restrict your movements (see HSE information [here](#)); and you are well; you are requested to complete your online academic modules during this time. These can be released to students early in circumstances where a student may not be able to attend their experiential learning placement.

By completing the online academic modules during a period of restricted movement, students will free up time to be on placement in lieu of time spent on academic modules.

Students **may** need to complete additional placement time (60 hrs. = two weeks of restricted movement) over the remaining weeks of the placement – please discuss this with your Practice Educator. How this additional placement time is completed is to be agreed upon between the student and their Senior Preceptor. Students will need to keep their Practice Educator informed as to how and when this additional time is completed.

**Q. In circumstances where I am unable to go on placement due to a requirement to self-isolate, how will this impact my placement?**

A. Where you are required to self-isolate (see HSE information [here](#)); because you:

- have symptoms of COVID-19
- are waiting for a test appointment and your test results, if you have symptoms of COVID-19
- have had a positive test result for COVID-19, even if you have mild symptoms or no symptoms

but you are feeling well; you are requested to complete your online academic modules during this time for the reasons outlined above.

Where you are unwell, your college/HEI sick policies will apply in such circumstances.



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F: +353 1 402 2272  
E: [ops@appel.ie](mailto:ops@appel.ie)  
W: [www.appel.ie](http://www.appel.ie)

Please keep your Practice Educator informed at all times.

### Q. What supports are available to me at this time?

A. Your Practice Educator(s), Heads of School and the APPEL team are available to offer you support and assistance as required. Please note that all academic staff across all three Schools of Pharmacy will be contactable via email. Your Schools of Pharmacy / Higher Education Institution will remain in contact with you throughout this time.

## Appendix 1: COVID-19 Supplemental Student Undertaking/Declaration

### Undertaking Experiential Learning Placements - Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

<b>Student Name (Block Capitals)</b>			
<b>School of Pharmacy (tick one)</b>	<b>UCC</b>	<b>RCSI</b>	<b>TCD</b>
<b>Your university email address:</b>			
<b>Training Establishment name and address for 5<sup>th</sup>-year experiential learning placement</b>			

In advance of the experiential learning placement as part of studies at the University/College listed above (“**University**”), I acknowledge I have a personal responsibility to protect myself, patients and the general public from the potential of COVID-19 virus transmission and to comply with Public Health Advice. Accordingly, I will ensure:

1. I am aware of and have familiarised myself with COVID-19 symptoms. Please see: <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>
2. I will not present myself to my experiential learning placement (or to the University) if I have symptoms of COVID-19 or acute infections such as symptoms of viral respiratory tract infection or gastroenteritis.
3. In the event that I develop COVID-19 or other communicable infectious disease (for list see <https://www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/>), I will immediately notify my Senior Preceptor and the Practice Educator in my School so the School can communicate with the relevant HSE service (where applicable)/Training Establishment, in case it has implications for patients and staff.
4. I commit to providing a record of daily declarations that I am free of symptoms of COVID-19 relating to each day that I present for placement, completed on the day of placement prior to my attendance at the Training Establishment.
5. Where required, I commit to maintaining a daily readily accessible record of the clinical areas I was assigned to and at what times. This may be required in the event of an IPC incident such as an outbreak.
6. I will keep myself up-to-date and comply with current Public Health Advice regarding COVID-19.
7. I am aware that if I am declared a close contact of someone with COVID-19 (as communicated by, for example, the contact tracing service) that I am not to present to my

Training Establishment (or to the University) until I have spoken to your Senior Preceptor and Practice Educator.

8. In advance of commencing my experiential learning placement, I will comply with all Infection Prevention and Control training required by my School and the HSE.
9. I will ensure that I abide by, and comply with, the rule of 'bare below the elbows/bare above the wrist' while on placement, where applicable.
10. I acknowledge I have been (or will be) provided with training in the performance of hand hygiene in advance of my placement and will undertake competence review at least once in each academic year.
11. I will comply with Infection Prevention and Control directions given by the HSE, my Senior Preceptor and other Clinical staff at all times when I am in clinical areas, and any other measures the HSE or my Senior Preceptor has in place to prevent the emergence of COVID-19 in while I am on placement.
12. I will cooperate with requirements for the management of outbreaks or other incidents of infection, including providing samples for testing where required.
13. I have considered the Personal Support Plan Questionnaire provided below (Appendix 2), should I need to self-isolate, restrict my movements or quarantine.

I acknowledge my placement is subject to Public Health Advice which may be in place from time to time, and that public health advice may result in changes to arrangements during the course of my placement.

### **Data Protection**

Any information disclosed to the University pursuant to this declaration will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality and processed in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy. The University is collecting this personal data in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and to implement the requirements of the HSE in relation to the undertaking of experiential learning placements. The legal basis for processing this data is based on protecting vital interests and for the reasons of public interest in the area of public health.

**Signed:**

**Print student name:**

**Student number:**

**Date:**

## Appendix 2 - Personal Support Plan Questionnaire

We are conscious that you may be moving to accommodation away from support networks such as family, relatives and friends for your placement. Support networks such as this would be vital to any student who may become unwell as a result of a COVID-19 infection or who may be required to self-isolate. You should consider your personal support plan while away from home should you need to self-isolate in this context.

### What to Consider for Personal Support Plan

1. Are you living alone at the moment, or will you be living alone?
2. If you are living alone at the moment or will shortly be living alone, have you identified a person nearby, such as a friend, fellow student or relative, who may be contacted in case of emergency?
3. Have you registered with a General Practitioner Doctor near your current location?
4. Do you have any underlying medical conditions that require prescribed medication? If so, do you have a friend, fellow student or relative, who can collect medication on your behalf from a pharmacy should you be required to self-isolate?
5. Should you be required to self-isolate, do you have the ability to order and make payment for food and provisions via online supermarket delivery?
6. Do you have a mobile phone which can be used to seek help during any period of self-isolation or in case of an emergency, and have you provided this number to your emergency contact person?

### Appendix 3 - Actions to be completed

Actions to be completed	Deadline
1. Review the HSE guidelines on vulnerable people. a. If this applies to you or anyone that you live with, contact your Practice Educator.	30/11/21
2. Complete and Return the <b>COVID-19 Supplemental Student Understanding/Declaration</b> (Appendix 1). This needs to be emailed to <a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a>	14/11/21
3. Complete the <a href="http://HSELand">HSELand</a> e-learning courses and submit certificates to <a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMRIC Introduction to Infection Prevention and Control</li> <li>• AMRIC Basics of Infection Prevention and Control</li> <li>• AMRIC Standard and Transmission Based Precautions</li> <li>• AMRIC Hand Hygiene</li> <li>• Putting on and Taking off PPE in Acute Healthcare Settings</li> <li>• Putting on and Taking off PPE in Community Healthcare Settings</li> </ul>	14/11/21
4. Review the resources available on the HPSC website on donning and doffing of PPE and on IPC guidance	14/11/21
5. Read and understand the Guidance to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 infection in pharmacies and the information provided by your University on COVID-19	14/11/21
6. Download the COVID-19 tracker app and remember to log your symptoms daily	03/01/22
7. Record symptoms on the VLE. If working in more than one site, this information must also be recorded. (Further information will be provided in advance of you starting on your placement).	04/01/22
8. Familiarise yourself with and remember the Government policies on Travel, Quarantine and Self-Isolation.	30/11/21