



2022-23 Preceptor Handbook 4th-Year Placement



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UCC

RCSI

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APPEL

An Chleamhnacht um Fhoighlaim ó
Thaithi Chleachladh na Cógaisíochta

Affiliation for Pharmacy
Practice Experiential Learning

What is APPEL?

APPEL (Affiliation for Pharmacy Practice Experiential Learning) was formed in 2015 by a consortium of the UCC School of Pharmacy, the RCSI School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences, and the Trinity School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. It was established to streamline the management of the common experiential learning placements of all three integrated pharmacy programmes in Ireland. It is overseen by the three Heads of the Schools of Pharmacy in UCC, RCSI, and Trinity.

The APPEL team consists of Practice Educators based within the three Schools of Pharmacy, and the Operations Team, led by the Director & National Coordinator of APPEL, based in the APPEL office. The team is available to support both Trainers and students throughout their experiential learning placements.

Message from the APPEL Team

Dear Preceptors,

The APPEL team is delighted to be working with you in your role as an APPEL Preceptor.

Many of you have years of experience tutoring and mentoring students; for others, this will be your first time hosting a pharmacy student. Your enthusiasm and willingness to provide student placements are critical to the success of the integrated pharmacy programme. Thank you for your ongoing support.

To assist you as our partners in delivering these placements, we have developed a number of resources, including our ["Guidance on Delivering APPEL Experiential Learning Placements"](#). We are also mindful, that no matter what your practice setting, and even though we are living with COVID-19 for over two years now, your student may continue to experience disruption of their placement this year due to the impact of Covid-19. You and your team will be very familiar with the 'new normal' but these changes may be very different and strange for your student. We have created [APPEL Preceptor FAQ and Remote Experiential Learning Placement Guidelines 4th Year Placements 2022](#) to support those of you who may have a remote-working aspect to your placement.

Furthermore, both the APPEL Operations team and our Practice Educators are available for support at any time; please do get in contact with us if you ever have any questions or we can provide any assistance.

By facilitating a placement, you are helping APPEL and the Schools of Pharmacy to deliver an innovative approach to pharmacy education. You will also be engaging with our talented and highly motivated students and have the opportunity to inspire them to consider a career in your organisation or practice setting. All of us at APPEL are most grateful to you for collaborating with us to make this experiential learning journey a success. We thank you for generously giving your time and expertise to support students with their development.

The APPEL Team

Quick Guide to the 4th-Year Placement

PLACEMENT SCHEDULE

Students must complete 30 hrs on placement between Monday and Friday (8 am - 6 pm) (excluding bank holidays). In addition, students must be available for four consecutive hours between Monday and Friday (8 am-6 pm) each week for online academic activities.

ATTENDANCE

This is a statutory placement defined in law as being 'at least four months' in duration. 100% attendance is required by all students. Any concerns regarding student's attendance or punctuality must be reported to the APPEL Ops team or Practice Educator as soon as possible.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Students must comply with the Schools of Pharmacy Code of Conduct while on placement. The Code of Conduct is available at the following [link](#). Breaches of the Code of Conduct must be reported to the APPEL Ops team or a Practice Educator as soon as possible.

CRITICAL INCIDENTS

All critical incidents (including but not limited to fire, burglary, hold-up, death or serious injury to staff or the student – e.g. needle stick injury) must be reported to the APPEL Ops team or a Practice Educator as soon as possible.

PATIENT SAFETY

Patient safety is the student's primary concern on placement, and students must be supervised accordingly to ensure patient safety. If you become aware of a potential patient safety incident concerning your student, please alert a Practice Educator or the APPEL Operations team immediately.

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

Competency Assessment must be completed on the APPEL Virtual Learning Environment by both the student and their Preceptor. The key dates for completion are:

- Formative assessment: completed by week ending 2nd October
- Summative assessment: completed by week ending 20th November

SUPPORT

See the page 36 of this handbook for contact details of the Practice Educators and the APPEL Operations Team.

TRAVEL

To a different Training Establishment: Travel between and away from Training Establishments must be notified to APPEL in advance to ensure all accreditation requirements are met. Travel between Training Establishments should occur only under exceptional circumstances.

Outside of the Republic of Ireland (RoI): If the opportunity to travel overseas as part of your placement arises, please contact the APPEL Office on 01-4025129 or ops@appel.ie as soon as possible to start the approval process. APPEL has developed a process to safeguard student health and safety when this does occur. See page 11 for further information on student travel.

Abbreviations and Definitions

Affiliation for Pharmacy Practice Experiential Learning (APPEL) – A collaboration between the three Schools of Pharmacy to manage the experiential learning placements for the integrated pharmacy programmes.

CCF – The PSI’s Core Competency Framework.

Competency Assessment – The process by which Preceptors will assess a student’s competency in the relevant behaviours in the CCF.

HEI – Higher Education Institution.

Practice Educator (PE) – An employee of one of the Schools of Pharmacy who also works with APPEL and acts as a liaison between APPEL, the Training Establishments/Trainers, the students, and their School of Pharmacy.

Preceptor – A registered Pharmacist who is overseeing the experiential placement of 4th-year student(s).

PSI – Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland.

RCSI – Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, University of Medicine and Health Sciences.

School of Pharmacy – UCC School of Pharmacy, RCSI School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences, or Trinity School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Trinity – University of Dublin, Trinity College.

Training Establishment – The specific location providing the placement.

UCC – University College Cork, National University of Ireland, Cork.

VLE – APPEL Virtual Learning Environment. APPEL’s virtual classroom in which students and their Preceptors can engage in certain activities. For students, this includes the academic modules relating to their placement, and for Preceptors, this could include online Preceptor training. Both students and Preceptors will use the APPEL VLE for Competency Assessment, and the APPEL VLE also hosts the placement matching system.

4th-Year Placement – Experiential learning placement in the fourth year of the five-year integrated pharmacy programme.

4th-Year Placements – Background Information

The New Five-Year Integrated Pharmacy Programme

Experiential learning placements are workplace-based learning experiences, which are dispersed within the integrated pharmacy programme (Fig. 1) and overseen by APPEL on behalf of the Schools of Pharmacy. The underpinning philosophy of experiential learning placements is that students remain as students while on placement.

It has been set out in legislation that a four-month experiential learning placement will be undertaken in the 4th year. The experiential learning placements undertaken by pharmacy students in 2nd year, 4th year and 5th year are overseen by APPEL.

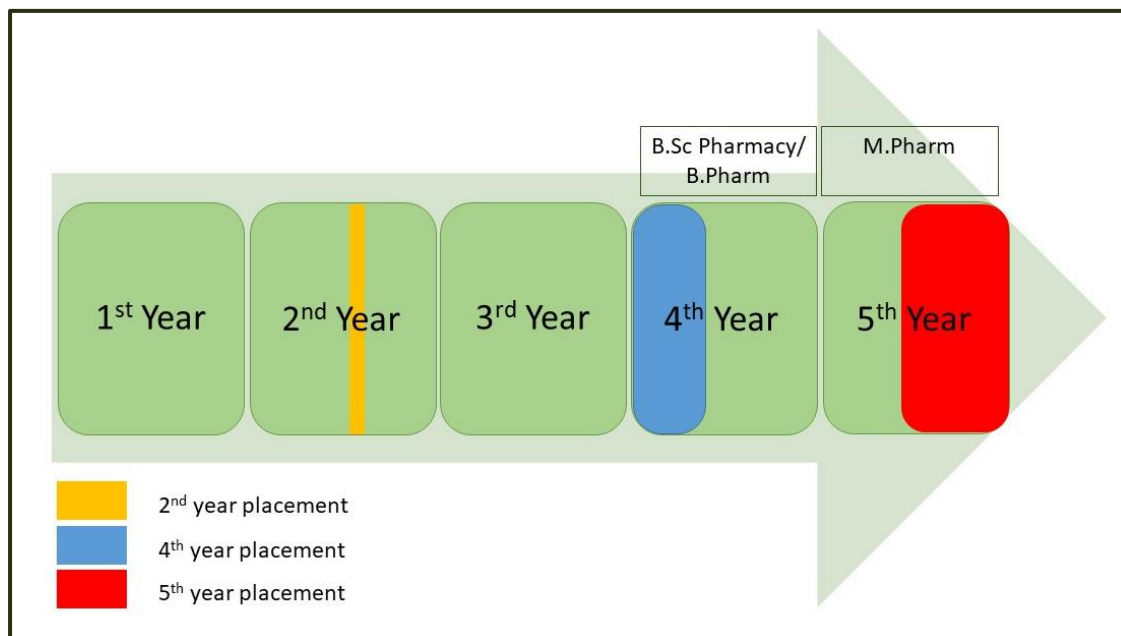


Fig. 1: Experiential learning placements overseen by APPEL in the 5-year integrated pharmacy programme

Section 1 – Practical Placement Information

When?

29th August – 16th December 2022

What time?

Students are required to complete 30 hours of placement each week. The hours of attendance must be of “University character”, i.e. **between 8am and 6pm on weekdays**. In addition, students must be provided with at least **one half-day each week** of no less than four consecutive hours, between 8am and 6pm on weekdays, to allow for uninterrupted time to complete academic work. Students will attend placement for 30 hours each week according to a timetable agreed with the Training Establishment.

Breaks: Students must be provided with appropriate breaks in accordance with legislation, and this time is not counted as part of their 30 hours placement per week.

Bank holidays: APPEL placement is not scheduled on bank holidays. Students are required to complete 22.5 hours during the week of a bank holiday.

What will students be doing during the placement?

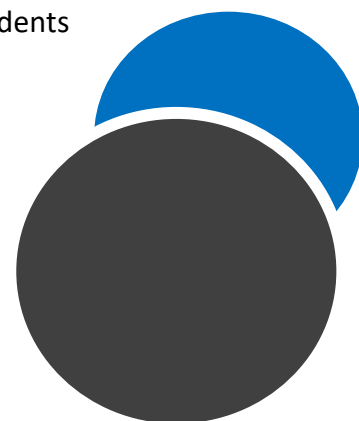
At the end of the 4th-year placement, it is intended that students will be able to demonstrate a required level of competency in the relevant behaviours in the PSI’s Core Competency Framework aligned to the three domains listed below:

1. Professional Practice
2. Personal Skills
6. Organisation and Management Skills

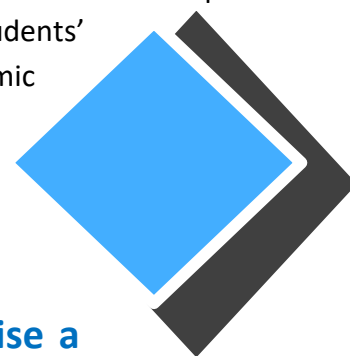
A list of the relevant PSI Core Competency Framework behaviours can be found [here](#). Students should be exposed to a sufficient range of activities and opportunities to enable them to develop these required competency behaviours. Examples of activities that your student can complete can be found in the [Guidance on Delivering APPEL-Experiential-Learning-Placements](#).

A training plan will enable you and your student to plan a sufficient range of activities. You can see a sample [here](#).

During the placement, the Preceptor will assess the level of competency a student displays in the relevant behaviours as part of the Competency Assessment. Further details on the Competency Assessment process can be found on page 20.



In addition, students will complete three online modules aligned to these three domains as part of their academic requirements. These modules are designed to support students' understanding of the theory underpinning the relevant behaviours. Academic staff are responsible for delivering and assessing these modules. Your student may ask your opinion on a topic they are completing as part of the online modules. More information on the online modules can be found in Appendix IV.



Where can I get support if I am unsure how to organise a training plan or activities for my student?

For some Training Establishments and Preceptors, this may be the first time you have had a pharmacy student. A Practice Educator will be able to support you to develop ideas for activities and can discuss the training plan with you. Contact details for the Practice Educators can be found at the end of this handbook.

What is the Guidance on Delivering APPEL Experiential Learning Placements?

You will have learned about the [Guidance on delivering APPEL Experiential Learning Placements](#) as part of your APPEL Trainer Training. APPEL experiential learning placements 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 guidance was developed to promote the educational experience of students on placement and to support Training Establishments and Trainers in the delivery of such placements. Any staff member involved in supporting your student during the placement should be familiar with the content of the guidance. If you have any questions about the guidance, please contact the APPEL Operations Team or a Practice Educator.

What happens if my student misses some placement time?

- This is a statutory placement, which is defined in law as being “at least four months” in duration. Thus, **100% attendance is expected on placement.**
- The APPEL timetable is flexible and can thus accommodate attendance at discretionary appointments or events by the student during the placement week.
- Students must complete 30 hours placement each week. However, where required, a student can decrease the number of hours on placement in one week and increase the number of hours in the following week(s) to complete the required amount of time, for example, 60 hours over two weeks. The expectation is that students will regularly complete 30 hours of placement time each week, and any deviation from this is an exception rather than a regular occurrence.
- If you are concerned that the student is not meeting the requisite amount of placement time, have any concerns regarding your student’s attendance and punctuality, or if the student

misses placement according to a pattern that may give cause for concern, e.g. every Monday, please inform either the Practice Educator or the APPEL Operations Team as soon as possible.

- At the end of placement, you will be required to sign a 'Declaration of Satisfactory Attendance and Student Behaviour' to confirm that the student has completed the requisite placement time (30 hours per week over four months, or equivalent).

What do I do if an opportunity for the student to travel presents while on placement?

➤ Travel within Ireland

There may be a number of reasons where an opportunity to travel within Ireland presents while on placement, e.g. team meetings in a different office, conferences relating to a student's placement, presentations or workshops. This presents a great opportunity for the student to develop competencies relating to teamwork and collaboration and is encouraged by APPEL. However, when making these arrangements, Training Establishments should consider the student's health and safety, impact on their personal circumstances, etc. Please feel free to contact the APPEL office or a Practice Educator for further guidance.

➤ Travel between Training Establishment sites

Students can only complete placements in their assigned accredited Training Establishment. If there is a need for the student to move to a different location/branch, on a temporary or permanent basis, placement providers should engage with APPEL regarding the accreditation status of the proposed new Training Establishment in advance.

➤ Travel overseas

In the past, some APPEL students were offered the opportunity to travel overseas during their placement. Although APPEL does not expect such opportunities to arise very often, the office has developed a process to safeguard student health and safety when this does occur. If the opportunity to travel overseas as part of your student's placement arises, please contact the APPEL Office on 01-4025129 or ops@appel.ie as soon as possible to start the approval process.

What do I do if a critical incident occurs during the placement?

A critical incident is any actual or alleged event or situation that creates a significant risk of substantial or serious harm to the physical or mental health, safety or well-being of a student. Examples include, but are not limited to, death or serious illness of a member of staff or patient, needle-stick injury to the student, student injury, fire, hold-up or burglary.

To support students' safety and welfare, the Training Establishment must contact a Practice Educator or the APPEL Operations Team if a critical incident arises during the placement. Each of the Schools of Pharmacy has additional support services, which can be offered to students if required. All details discussed with APPEL will be handled in a sensitive and confidential manner.

What do I do if I am concerned about the Student's conduct?

Students are required to adhere to the [APPEL Joint Schools Code of Conduct](#).

As a Preceptor, you will play a pivotal role in supporting your student's professional development. Your student will have gained academic knowledge from the first three years of their undergraduate degree, and this placement is an opportunity for them to apply this knowledge in a practical setting.

As part of the 4th-year placement, students will be developing their professionalism. If a student is displaying any behaviours that are not in accordance with the [APPEL Joint Schools Code of Conduct](#), please get in touch with a Practice Educator or the APPEL Operations Team. At this early stage of a student's professional career, it is important that such behaviours are highlighted to students, and they are given support to help them develop. Discussing a matter with APPEL does not necessarily mean it will impact a student's progression, but it will allow an opportunity for students to receive appropriate feedback and support.

At the end of the placement, you will be asked to complete a declaration that declares that *"you are unaware of any reason, on the grounds of health or character, as to why your student might be unfit to be registered as a pharmacist in the future"*. If your student's behaviour throughout the placement causes you any concerns about completing this declaration, please contact a Practice Educator as soon as possible.



If you become aware of any potential breaches of the [APPEL Joint Schools Code of Conduct](#) or any potential patient safety incidents during the placement, please contact a Practice Educator or the APPEL Operations

The roles and responsibilities of the Preceptor are covered in the APPEL Trainer Training. Some of the key roles and responsibilities are listed on the next page to support you in your role and as a reminder from your training.

Roles of the Preceptor

Role	How do I do this?
<p><u>Facilitator</u> “Helping to guide your student’s learning.”</p> <p>Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, but an experiential placement is a different learning environment compared to the structured learning environment of the lecture theatre. To help students to adapt to this learning environment, your student will look to you as a facilitator to help guide their learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By identifying learning opportunities and recognising chances to broaden your student’s learning experience, you can assist them in achieving their learning outcomes. You should recognise, facilitate and support opportunities for your student to practise the behaviours of the PSI CCF. • Take responsibility for initiating and maintaining a suitable learning environment for your student. • Support your student in preparing a training plan to provide a framework for their learning and help ensure that they are exposed to a sufficient range of opportunities to develop their competency.
<p><u>Role-Model</u> “Leading by example.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By instilling professional values and attitudes while mentoring and guiding your student through the complexities of your current practice, you will support your student’s professional development. • Challenge your student’s perceptions of the diversity of the role of the pharmacist.
<p><u>Coach</u> “Improving your students’ performance by providing feedback, guidance and support.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide timely, constructive and supportive development feedback in a structured manner throughout the placement. • Encourage self-directed and reflective learning.
<p><u>Instructor/teacher</u> “Helping your student acquire knowledge and skills.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share your expertise in your area of practice. • Teach your student about what you are doing. • Refer your student to relevant guidelines, references and resources. • Students will bring their own attitudes, motivation and experiences to the placement, which in some instances may not be entirely compatible with your values, approach to learning, and experience of teaching. In such situations, it is important for you to recognise that people learn in different ways and adapt your teaching style (in so far as possible) to one that suits the needs of your student.

The commitments of the Preceptor can be found in the Trainer Accreditation form; a sample form can be found on the APPEL website (<http://www.appel.ie/resources>). Some of the specific responsibilities for a Preceptor for a 4th-year placement are listed below:

Responsibilities of the 4th-year placement Preceptor

1. Be knowledgeable regarding the behaviours in the CCF against which your student will be assessed ([Competency Assessment Behaviours Year 4 2022](#))
2. Be available to your student for guidance and direction. While an on-site Supervisor can be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of a student, as Preceptor, you are responsible for the overall learning experience of your student.
3. Have regular meetings with your student and share your insights as an experienced pharmacist. As a minimum requirement, you should have one meeting every four weeks, of which two sessions during the placement must be face-to-face. Students will benefit greatly from their interactions with you as a professional role model.
4. Complete your student's first and final Competency Assessments.
5. Contact a Practice Educator as soon as possible if there are concerns regarding your student achieving the required level of competency.
6. Notify APPEL if a student is not meeting the requisite amount of placement time or you have any concerns regarding a student's attendance and punctuality.
7. Contact a Practice Educator or the APPEL Operations Team immediately if there is a potential breach of the Schools of Pharmacy Code of Conduct, a potential patient safety concern, or a critical incident.
8. Contact a Practice Educator or the APPEL Operations Team immediately if you are no longer available to act as a Preceptor or will be absent for more than four weeks throughout the placement.
9. Complete the "Declaration of Satisfactory Attendance and Student Behaviour" at the end of the placement.

Placement Support

One of APPEL's primary goals is to support Preceptors to undertake their roles. This support is provided in several ways. If you have any questions or concerns about the placement or your student before, during, or after the placement, please do not hesitate to contact us. All contact details can be found at www.appel.ie or at the end of this handbook.

Additional training

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

In an increasingly diverse world, people are becoming aware of their unconscious biases and have a desire to develop their cultural competence. As a pharmacist and Trainer, we know you are committed to treating all patients, colleagues and students with dignity and respect. You can learn more about Equality and Diversity, Overcoming Unconscious Bias and Dignity at Work in these two short courses on HSeLanD:

- [Equality and Diversity](#)
- [Overcoming Unconscious Bias in the Workplace](#)
- [Dignity at Work](#)

These courses have also been signposted for students. If you ever have any concerns about your students' behaviour in this respect, please contact a Practice Educator or the APPEL office immediately.

The APPEL Network

In the past, Trainers have shared that they would like to learn more and develop skills in different areas. The APPEL Network started in September 2020 with a series of monthly webinars on a range of different topics, including leadership skills, motivating students, and fostering critical thinking. You can view recordings of these webinars and sign up for future webinars at <https://www.appel.ie/events/the-appel-network/>.

Section 2 – Placement Planning

For you and your student to get the most out of the experience, it is important to be prepared. Practice Educators will prepare students before they go on their placement, including guidance in the following areas:

- Developing through experiential learning
- Taking responsibility for their own learning
- Attendance and punctuality
- Code of Conduct
- Dress code
- GDPR and confidentiality
- Mobile phone use
- Learning activities

Students have signed a student placement agreement, read a student handbook, and attended a student Pre-Placement Preparation Day.

The PSI requires APPEL, on behalf of the Schools of Pharmacy, to accredit all Training Establishments and Trainers. The APPEL Operations Team will have been in contact with you regarding the accreditation requirements. Below is a checklist of the requirements to be completed.

Preceptor Pre-Placement Check List

1. Training Establishment Accreditation

- ☐ Training Establishment accreditation form

2. Preceptor Accreditation

- ☐ Trainer accreditation form
- ☐ Preceptor training completed
- ☐ Confirm can fulfil Preceptor requirements
 - The Preceptor is a PSI-registered pharmacist
 - The Preceptor is employed a minimum of three days per week
- ☐ Can accommodate regular contact with the student (at least one meeting every four weeks)
- ☐ Can comply with requisite supervision requirement - maximum absence during placement is four weeks

3. Plan Your Student's Induction

- ☐ Plan the time and date to complete the induction, and consider other staff who may be able to support you.
 - Some helpful hints can also be found on page 18, and a sample induction and training plan is provided [here](#).

4. Brief Your Team

APPEL experiential learning placements may be a new experience for many Training Establishments and their staff. Therefore it is important that all staff members are aware of the structure of these learning placements and the role of the student. Some topics you may consider including in your team briefing are:

- ☐ The student's name and when they will start
- ☐ What the student will know
- ☐ What the student can and cannot do
- ☐ Hours/scheduled activities
- ☐ Support/consider buddy system
- ☐ Supervising the student

For staff involved in the day-to-day supervision of the student, it will be necessary for them to be familiar with the [Guidance on delivering APPEL Experiential Learning Placements](#).

5. Plan Your Student's Supervision

All students on placement must be supervised at all times. Supervision must be appropriate to the placement type and the learning environment while ensuring patient safety is a prime focus.

- ☐ Before the placement, consider how your student will be supervised; it may be appropriate to have other team members support you with this. **A student on their experiential learning placement cannot act as, or act as the replacement for, a qualified pharmacist.**
- ☐ Have you an On-Site Supervisor who can be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of a student?
- ☐ As a Preceptor, are those involved in the day-to-day supervision of your student aware of their supervisory and support role and are they willing to and capable of mentoring a student.

Section 3 – During the Placement

Week One – Induction

Completing an induction and training plan is essential to ensure a good learning experience. A Sample APPEL Induction and Training Plan for 4th-year placements are available in the [resources](#) section of the APPEL website. Some additional hints and tips for an effective induction and training plan are:



Hints and Tips: Induction and Training Plan

- ✓ Sit down and discuss your plans for the placement with your student.
- ✓ Discuss your student's previous relevant experience and ask your student about their expectations and objectives for the placement.
- ✓ Clearly set out your expectations and objectives for the placement.
- ✓ Document agreed expectations, objectives, and a schedule for meetings in the training plan. You could ask your student to do this!
- ✓ Discuss and plan for key dates, e.g. Competency Assessments.
- ✓ Discuss how you like to teach and support and invite your student to describe how they like to learn, e.g. should the student ask questions as they arise, or does it work better to keep them until the end of the day?
- ✓ Ensure your student is introduced to key staff and their roles. Explain how other staff can support your student.
- ✓ Show your student the Training Establishment's layout and facilities and explain a typical daily routine in that environment.
- ✓ Provide your student with and arrange for training in any key policies and procedures, e.g. security, dress code, confidentiality, and procedures specific to your Training Establishment.
- ✓ Ensure your student knows who to contact if they have a difficulty – for example not feeling well, personal emergency, running late.
- ✓ Ensure both you and your student understand how to report student absence to APPEL and how to access APPEL supports.
- ✓ Agree suitable tasks for your student. Consider appropriate tasks that your student may be able to complete at busy periods.
- ✓ Ensure both you and your student have access to your student's Practice Educators' names, contact phone numbers and email addresses, and to the contact details for the APPEL Operations Team.
- ✓ Complete a Health and Safety induction.

Placement Activities

At the end of the 4th-year placement, it is intended that students will be able to demonstrate a required level of competency in the relevant behaviours in the PSI's Core Competency Framework aligned to the three domains listed below:

1. Professional Practice
2. Personal Skills
6. Organisation and Management Skills

A list of the relevant PSI Core Competency Framework behaviours can be found [here](#). In your practice environment, you will be able to provide your student with many activities that will help develop their competency in these areas. Examples of activities that your student can complete can be found in the [Guidance on Delivering APPEL Experiential Learning Placements](#).

Experiential learning is “the process of learning through experience” and “learning through reflection on doing”. It would be useful to consider the day-to-day activities that you complete as a pharmacist and consider which of these activities would be appropriate for a 4th-year student.

As the Preceptor, you will want the best learning experience for your student and will want to create the best learning environment possible. You can discuss the following tips with other staff members involved in training your student to achieve this.



Helpful Hints: Creating a Highly Productive Learning Environment

- Encourage your student to have an active role; professional skills cannot be learnt by observation alone.
- Provide your student with activities that require them to demonstrate learned skills and involve decision-making.
- Provide your student with opportunities to apply new knowledge and skills under supervision. These opportunities are best provided soon after the knowledge or skills are learnt.
- Provide activities that are of sufficient difficulty to be challenging, but are not discouraging.
- Discuss the learning task once it has been completed to help your student's understanding of their experience.
- Recommend that your student use a journal; this can be used to note new experiences, things they have learned, or things they wish to follow up. It could also be used as a revision tool or to note points for discussion with you.
- Encourage your student to have an inquisitive nature and to research things rather than expecting to be told the answer.
- Encourage your student to review how they perform activities; this is essential to developing and refining skills.

Competency Assessment

In the Competency Assessment, students are assessed against the behaviours described in the CCF. The CCF contains six domains, and within each domain, there are several behavioural statements describing each competency. During the 4th-year placement, Preceptors are asked to rate their student against the relevant behaviours for just three domains of the CCF [Competency Assessment Behaviours Year 4 2022](#) You will use the rating system described in the table below.

Level	Rating	Definition	Percentage
N/A	Cannot	Student not exposed to this behaviour in the Training Establishment.	N/A
1	Rarely	Very rarely meets the standard expected. No logical thought process appears to apply.	0-20%
2	Sometimes	Much more haphazard than “mostly”.	21-50%
3	Mostly	Implies standard practice with occasional lapses.	51-84%
4	Consistently	Demonstrates the expected standard practice with rare lapses.	85-100%

As students are only in the fourth year of their undergraduate programme, they are not expected to be of the same standard of competency as a newly qualified pharmacist, i.e. demonstrating all of the behaviours consistently. Therefore, although some students may demonstrate some behaviours consistently, the standard required at the end of the 4th-year placement is a minimum of level 3 in all of the relevant behaviours.

There will be two Competency Assessments during the placement:

- **Formative Assessment:** **Week ending 2nd October**
- **Summative Assessment:** **Week ending 20th November**

The formative assessment (also known as the assessment **for** learning) will take place at the end of week 5, and the summative assessment (also known as the assessment **of** learning) will take place at the end of week 12.

The formative assessment is undertaken to allow your student to identify behaviours that they need to practise and improve upon. The ratings achieved at this point **do not** contribute towards the overall assessment outcome. It is completed by the end of week five of placement to give you and your student sufficient time to identify practice opportunities to support their improvement and development. There is no expectation that students will have reached the required standard of competency by this first assessment.

The summative assessment is the final Competency Assessment and is undertaken at the end of week 12. In this assessment, your student is required to achieve a minimum of a level 3 in all of the behaviours assessed.

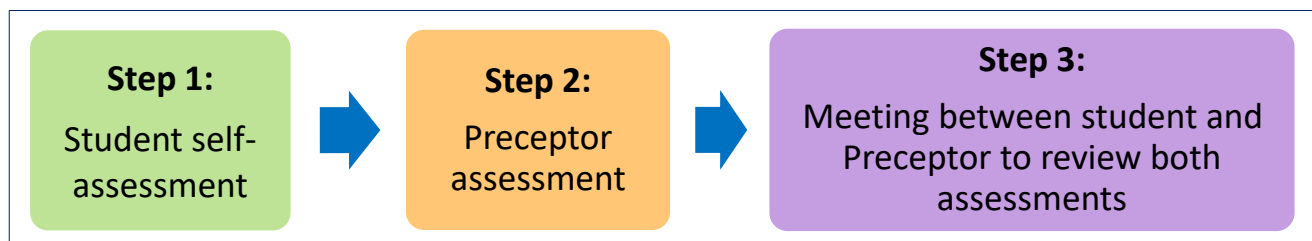
If your student has not achieved a level 3 in all behaviours by the end of week 12, you should contact a Practice Educator immediately. The Practice Educator will support you and your student in developing a focused training plan for the final four weeks of the placement to give the student every opportunity to reach a level 3 by the end of the placement. The final Competency Assessment will remain open until the end of week 16 to allow you to amend any scores given at week 12 if required.

You may notice that the Competency Assessment does not contain all behaviours from domains 1, 2, and 6 in the PSI's CCF document – some behaviours have been removed from the Competency Assessment for 4th-year placement as they may not be possible to achieve in the 4th-year placement setting or may not apply to all practice settings. The behaviours that will be assessed can be found here [Competency Assessment Behaviours Year 4 2022](#) and at www.appel.ie/resources. If you believe that any of these behaviours are not applicable in your placement setting, please contact a Practice Educator as soon as possible.

In the past, some Preceptors have raised queries regarding the applicability of certain behaviours in their particular setting. Some suggested activities that could develop competency in these behaviours can be found on page 23. These may assist you and your student in identifying an activity that is suitable for your placement environment.

The Competency Assessment will be completed and recorded on the APPEL Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The VLE will link each student with their Preceptor and provides details of all of the required competency behaviours.

Competency Assessment Process



Step 1 The student completes a self-assessment exercise where they assign themselves a rating in each of the specified behaviours, based on what they consider their competency rating to be.

Step 2 You rate the student in each of the specified competency behaviours based on your experience of the student's competency. Before rating the student, you may wish to get feedback from other colleagues who have been involved in the student's training.

Step 3 A meeting should be organised between you and the student, where you can review your respective ratings together. The following should be discussed as part of this meeting:

- a) You should provide constructive feedback that (i) identifies those areas where the student has performed well and (ii) highlights where improvement is needed and how this may be achieved. The provision of feedback is particularly important for the first assessment to ensure the student is best placed to achieve the required rating in the final assessment.
- b) Discuss where any differences have arisen between your ratings – seek to understand why the student felt they were at that rating and provide honest and constructive feedback. It is important to check the student's understanding of the feedback provided.
- c) Identify the areas where the student is not at the required rating; explore why this may be? Have they not yet had opportunities to develop this competency, or do they require more practice in certain activities to develop the competency? Consider and discuss with the student activities that may provide opportunities to develop these competencies and plan these activities in the training plan.
- d) Record the feedback given at each assessment on the VLE; record actions that should be completed, and ensure the student amends the training plan as required.



Helpful Hints:

- Arrange a time to complete Step 2 of the Competency Assessment and a time for the meeting with your student to discuss the feedback and ratings from your assessment (Step 3 of the process) well in advance of the required deadlines to allow for unexpected delays.
- Check your student understands the feedback you are providing and record your feedback on the VLE.
- Using the training plan template. Put a plan (with dates) in place that establishes opportunities to enable your student to be exposed to activities that will help them reach the required level of competency.
- If you believe that any of the behaviours are not applicable in your placement setting, please contact a Practice Educator.
- Seek help early. If you have identified or have concerns about your student's development of competency contact a Practice Educator.

Table 1: Examples of Activities to support Competency Development.

Competency Behaviour	Community Pharmacy	Hospital Pharmacy	Industry	Role-Emerging Practice
1.1.1 Demonstrates a “patient-centred” approach to practice	Counselling patients. Involving patients in decision-making, e.g. brand versus generic.	Communication with patients – med rec/counselling when initiated on new med/discharge counselling.	Impact of role on patient, e.g. does the batch conform to the necessary standards / does the PIL contain all relevant safety updates?	How will the patient be affected by the project, e.g. how will research innovation/pricing of medicine / licensing of medicine affect the patient? How will changes be communicated to patient? Are patients involved?
1.4.3 Recognises ethical dilemmas in practice scenarios and reasons through dilemmas in a structured manner	Improperly written CD prescription. Emergency supply of controlled drug. Doctor self-prescribing.	Risk versus benefit of interventions in, e.g. critical care/oncology. Patient discloses information to pharmacist but does not want, e.g. doctor, to know.	Quality: Risk versus benefit of batch release in different scenarios. Regulatory: Risk versus benefit of removing products with low sales from a market.	Practice setting dependent – day-to-day ethical dilemmas. Ethical issues with research considered fully. Prioritisation of tasks in circumstances of finite resources (time, money).
2.1.2 “Leads by example by acting to ensure patient safety and quality within the	a) Demonstrating a good example of patient safety to pharmacy team, e.g. has an effective procedure for dispensing prescriptions	a) Demonstrating a good example of patient safety to pharmacy team, e.g. has an effective	Complying with SOPs, e.g. handwashing and correct garbing procedures before entering manufacturing areas.	Research-based – accuracy in measurements and in recording lab results accurately. Following SOPs.

pharmacy environment.”	b) Using effective communication skills to relay accurate information to other healthcare professionals with medicines queries c) Discussing potential clinical interventions with Preceptor/pharmacist	procedure for dispensing prescriptions b) Using effective communication skills to relay accurate information to other healthcare professionals with medicines queries c) Discussing potential clinical interventions with Preceptor/pharmacist	*within the placement environment	*within the placement environment
6.1.7 “Reflects on and demonstrates learning from critical incidents.”	Reviewing error log and presenting findings to team on strategies implemented to reduce risk	Reviewing error log and presenting findings to team on strategies implemented to reduce risk	Root cause analysis for a process investigation	Simulated situation – e.g. GDPR breach in clinical trial. Discussing how to deal with it with Preceptor
6.3.4 “Supports and contributes to staff training and continuing	Training staff on a new SOP that has been implemented in the pharmacy, e.g. request for Sumatriptan	Giving clinical case presentation to department staff	Giving presentation to site staff on medicines produced at plant – mode of action, indications	Giving presentation on progress of research project at seminar

professional development.”				
6.5.3 “Contributes to the development, implementation, maintenance and training of staff on standard operating procedures, as appropriate to their level of responsibility.”	a) Drafting SOP for supply of new ‘P’ medicine and training staff on it. b) Following SOPs for dispensing, OTC consultations, etc.	Following SOPs for taking a medicines information query, dispensing a medication, etc.	a) Training staff on implementation of an SOP. b) Demonstrating how they adhere to an SOP in their activities. c) Reviewing and approving cleaning documentation, including cleaning batch records and cleaning protocols	Becoming trained in an area requiring an updated SOP and drafting or reviewing SOP (e.g. GDPR)
6.5.4 “Contributes to regular audit activities and reports and acts upon findings.”	Partaking in Pharmacy Assessment System and reporting on findings to Preceptor	Auditing of near-miss log – reporting on findings to Preceptor	Participating in regular GMP walk-downs and communicate findings at team meeting	Completing an audit of SOP training – communicate reminders to those who still have to complete required training

Feedback

We greatly appreciate your open and honest feedback on what is working well and how we can make things better so that we can improve this experience for everyone involved. Please get in touch with APPEL at any time during the placement if you have any feedback or suggestions.

At the end of the placement, we will send you a placement evaluation - we appreciate you taking the time to complete the evaluation. We also welcome feedback from students and conduct surveys and focus groups with them after their placement. Some examples of the feedback received from previous 4th-year students can be found on page 29 and may be helpful to consider when preparing for your student's placement.

Here are some of the initiatives we have introduced based on your feedback:

APPEL Forums

APPEL has a number of Forums in place to enable communication between APPEL placement providers across the various pharmacy settings. If you would like to be involved in the APPEL forum, please contact ops@appel.ie

The APPEL Network

In the past, Trainers have shared that they would like to learn more and develop skills in different areas. The APPEL Network started in September 2020 with a series of monthly webinars on a range of different topics, including leadership skills, motivating students, and fostering critical thinking. You can view recordings of these webinars and sign up for future webinars at <https://www.appel.ie/events/the-appel-network/>

Competency Assessment Clinics

From previous feedback, we have found that completing the formative Competency Assessment can bring up some questions for Preceptors. To assist you with any questions you may have and support you in providing learning opportunities for your students, our Practice Educators will hold Competency Assessment Clinics after the formative Competency Assessment has closed.

Future of pharmacIE

In 2021, APPEL held the inaugural Future of pharmacIE event. This online careers event for pharmacy students and professionals will run again in 2022, on 20th October.

You can find out more about this event and register your interest here: <https://www.appel.ie/events/future-of-pharmacie/>

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can the student not attend placement in the evening or at weekends?

One of the core principles of APPEL placements is that students remain as students while on placement. Hours of attendance are designed to be of a “University Character”. This ensures APPEL and University student supports are available for the student during placement hours.

What do I do if the student is unwell or absent?

If the student is unwell during their placement, please excuse them from attendance and/or help them get medical care, as appropriate. If you are concerned about a student’s health, attendance, or they are not meeting the requisite amount of placement time, please contact a Practice Educator or APPEL Operations Team as soon as possible.

Why do I have to inform APPEL of any concerns regarding student attendance and complete the “Declaration of satisfactory attendance and student behaviour” at the end of placement?

The placement is defined in law as being ‘at least four months in duration.’ For the student to fulfil this legal requirement - 100% attendance is required on placement. The Schools of Pharmacy have to ensure this legal requirement has been fulfilled, so they have to monitor and manage all attendance. If a student is not attending placement, APPEL and the Schools of Pharmacy need to be made aware of this to address the situation and offer the student any supports required. During placement, students remain registered with their HEI, and each HEI, therefore, has a duty of care to their student.

I’m offering a paid placement; can I ask my student to sign our standard contract?

Students can sign a contract with their Training Establishment. However, during APPEL Placement hours, the primary relationship between the student and their Preceptor is that of a student and a Trainer. Training Establishments must therefore not enter into any contracts with students which are inconsistent or conflict with this relationship or conflict with APPEL guidelines. It is a condition of engagement with APPEL that the Training Establishment and Trainer agree that APPEL guidelines and agreements supersede any contracts between students and their Training Establishments. A breach of this condition could result in the withdrawal of APPEL accreditation. Contracts must not conflict with the placement timetable nor require students to engage in activities unrelated to behaviours described in the PSI Core Competency Framework during placement hours.

Can I get a really good student back to complete their 5th-year placement?

No, the legislation (SI 377, 2014) does not permit students to complete their 4th and 5th-year placements in the same Training Establishment.

Can I stop the placement, mid-placement?

If you are not certain that your Training Establishment will be able to take a student for the entire duration of the placement, please inform APPEL before the placement starts. In cases of emergency or serious and unexpected shortage of staff to supervise the student, please contact APPEL as soon as possible.

What happens if there is a change in Preceptor during the placement?

If you are aware there is going to be a change in Preceptor, you must notify the APPEL Operations Team immediately, and they will discuss with you the necessary arrangements for paperwork and accreditation of the new Preceptor. You must ensure there is an adequate handover of information regarding the student's progression and competency between the Preceptors.

Appendix I - Tips from past Preceptors and Students

Tips and Advice from Preceptors

“We put a lot of planning into our student induction, to ensure the student got off to a great start...a useful topic that we also included was email etiquette.”

“Our student was very shy, I suggested they get to know one patient well initially. I introduced the student to one regular patient, and then encouraged the student to speak to that patient each time they came in to help build up a connection and overcome shyness.”

“We really wanted our students to be able to self-start and have ownership of their activities and tasks....To help this, as part of the induction and during regular meetings, we would discuss the following:

- Encourage self-directed learning and highlight Training Establishment resources that were available e.g., students could be sent links to resources to enable them to undertake their own research and preparation.
- Encourage the student to develop the ability to act independently and with clarity of purpose, looking for support when necessary.
- Encourage the student to find out about other roles within the company.
- Encourage the student to learn teamwork, within a team and across different groups.
- Encourage the student to manage their time, understand their own capacity and time management, and understand how to manage different and changing priorities.”

Industry – “To help my student see the relevance of the competencies regarding patient care, I explained that quality is all about the patient in all its aspects, and so “patient care” is underlying every procedure and SOP in the organisation”.

Feedback from Past Students - Hints and Tips

What is important to students?

- Completing an induction. Students said, "It is important to discuss and have an understanding of your Preceptor's expectations and goals of the placement."
- An opportunity to discuss and review their placement goals halfway through the placement. Depending on the practice setting, students said they might not know enough about the placement to set realistic goals at the start and would therefore like the opportunity to review these once they have a better understanding of the placement setting.
- All staff members of the Training Establishment understanding the purpose of the four-month placement and the role of the student.
- Receiving feedback on how they are developing. As part of the feedback received after the formative competency assessment, students would like to get an insight from their Preceptor on how they can improve specific behaviours and what the Preceptor would expect to see if a student were demonstrating each behaviour.
- Students also appreciate when feedback is included within the comment section of the APPEL VLE when rating the individual behaviours.

What type of activities did students find provided good learning opportunities?

- Having their own project to work on.
- Being assigned a topic to review and presenting it to other team members.
- Reviewing error reports.
- Being involved in meetings on current projects.
- Completing blog posts/journal club entries.
- Compiling training.

What did students appreciate their Preceptors doing?

- Setting them up with a buddy at induction.
- Involving the student in tasks that the Preceptor is doing – even if student was just shadowing.
- Meeting regularly with the student – students said that sit-down, face-to-face chats are always best but regular contact even by email/phone is really appreciated.
- Checking in with students and offering support to students regularly, even if the student does not seem to need it. Sometimes students feel that there is an expectation that they should be able to do a task without asking for help or asking questions.
- Asking students if they have any questions, as asking questions can be uncomfortable for some students. If they are asked regularly, they may, over time, find it easier to ask themselves.

Appendix II - Examples of activities completed by students on 4th-year placement

Examples of Some Activities Completed in Pharmaceutical Industry Placements

Placement Example 1 – Manufacturing Site

1. Activities to develop communication skills-

- Learning about the hierarchy of quality review and management structures, including attending and actively contributing to daily meetings.
- Communicating information and quality-related issues to the wider quality team.
- Learning when and how to escalate issues to other members of the team.

2. Activities to develop workplace management and quality assurance competency

- Updating quality documentation, e.g. completing pre and post-production batch record review.
- Preparing manufacturing batch records for the QP.
- Understanding quality oversight structures and participating in quality projects.
- Participating in root cause analysis for processes.
- Participating in GMP audits.
- Completing end of month QA metrics.
- Participating in international quality management processes and meetings.

3. Activities to develop engaging in appropriate CPD

- Encouraging students to reflect on and discuss any learnings from visits to manufacturing sites and other departments and laboratories.

Placement Example 2 – Pharmaceutical Industry Global Office

1. Activities to develop workplace management and quality assurance competency

- Supporting the development of medical information literature.
- Reviewing non-urgent material/medicine information queries prior to team review.
- Completing internal quality audits, e.g. reviewing the completion of SOP records.

2. Activities to develop team working and self-management skills

- Facilitating meetings, learning to take meeting minutes.
- Working with other students on placement, organising the final team meeting of the placement, including preparing the agenda and facilitating the meeting.
- Setting up and preparing for one-to-one meetings with their Preceptor.

3. Activities to develop leadership skills and engaging in appropriate CPD

- Completing a presentation to the group manager about their experience as a student in that Training Establishment.
- Participating in company careers symposium.

Examples of some activities completed in Role Emerging Practice Placements

Placement Example 1 – Academia

1. Developing skills and supporting ongoing projects within the Training Establishment

- Supporting projects in laboratory-based research.
- Completing desk research of laboratory processes to understand the reason for the process.
- Learning new techniques and understanding formal procedures, e.g. how to write an SOP.
- Analysing, manipulating quantitative or qualitative data.
- Reporting data, writing up reports, and sharing and discussing data with the wider team.

2. Activities to develop workplace management, communication and quality assurance

- Managing and organising their own work within time constraints and proactively seeking assistance in a timely manner.
- Communicating their research and data in a clear and concise manner.

Placement Example 2 – Professional body

1. Developing skills and supporting ongoing projects within the Training Establishment

- Completing quality checks and undertaking annual reviews.
- Learning about quality assurance processes.
- Involvement in planning for training courses.

2. Activities to develop team working and self-management skills

- Working with and meeting new people and developing personal skills.
- Giving a presentation.

Examples of some activities completed in Hospital Placements

1. Developing skills and supporting ongoing projects within the Training Establishment

- Participating in preparing and sending out medication safety newsletters.
- Participating in Hospital's Quality Team meetings and activities.
- Learning how the lab results that the pharmacist relies upon are processed and managed in a medical lab.

2. Activities to develop workplace management and communication skills

- Learning from resources available in the hospital, e.g. Completing ISBAR training and developing logical thought processes in the communication of information.
- Preparing draft responses to medication queries from consultants.

3. Engaging in appropriate CPD and Teamwork

- Spending time with other healthcare professionals, e.g. dieticians, physiotherapists.

Examples of some activities completed in Community Placements

1. Auditing and reviewing the system for medication error management within the pharmacy

- Developing a new near-miss log template for the pharmacy to facilitate convenient and accurate recording of the "near misses".
- Auditing the existing "near miss" incidents and reporting back to the pharmacist and team.

2. Developing a SOP for a product newly available as OTC medicine

- Training staff on the new SOP.
- Auditing, reviewing and adding updates to existing SOPs.

3. Developing a new "workflow" process for management of repeat prescriptions using reports available on dispensing software

4. Supporting the pharmacist to prepare and organise governance and management for nursing home dispensing

Appendix III – Placement Governance

APPEL wants all students and Training Establishments to have an enjoyable and rewarding placement experience. To ensure this, APPEL has implemented a quality assurance process for all placements. Students, Preceptors, and Training Establishments are all required to partake in the governance processes, as described below.

Students

Student Placement Agreement and Student Handbook

Students must complete a placement agreement, which contains the terms and conditions of the APPEL placement, and read the student handbook before placement. A copy of both of these can be found on the APPEL website.

Preceptors

Trainer Accreditation

Every Preceptor is required to complete Trainer Accreditation in advance of the placement. This contains the terms and conditions of being an APPEL Preceptor. Trainers are also required to complete a number of declarations, including a connections declaration, a declaration that they will complete the APPEL Preceptor Trainer Training and the legal declarations required by SI 377/2014.

Preceptor Training

Each APPEL Preceptor must undertake APPEL Trainer Training. This can be undertaken in a live webinar or self-directed course online. Regardless of the mode of training, each participant must undertake an assessment on completion of the training.

APPEL Preceptor Requirements

Each student will have a named pharmacist Preceptor assigned to them for the placement. The role of the Preceptor is to support the student in their development as a pharmacy professional. The Preceptor must be a PSI Registered pharmacist and must be employed by the Training Establishment for a minimum of three days/week or equivalent. They must be available to the student for guidance and direction but are not required to supervise the student directly. Preceptors are also required to sign a 'Declaration of Satisfactory Attendance and Student Behaviour' to confirm that the student has completed the requisite placement time (30 hours per week over four months, or equivalent).

Training Establishments

Training Establishment Accreditation

The Training Establishment Accreditation outlines the responsibilities of both APPEL and the Training Establishment in their respective participation in student placement(s). It details placement requirements including insurance, induction, health and safety requirements, the suitability of placement environment and that the Training Establishment has the capacity to provide the student with adequate supervision, and that students are vetted by their HEI rather than the Training Establishment. Training Establishment Accreditation also includes certain declarations, including a connections declaration and the legal declarations required by SI 377/2014.

Appendix IV – Online Module Outlines

Module 1: Professional Practice

Module Aims and Rationale

This module aims to help students develop their knowledge, skills, and attributes in CCF Domain 1, Professional Practice. The module focuses on assisting students to develop the concept of what it means to be a pharmacist. It will encompass the legal, ethical, and professional challenges faced by pharmacists in their working environment and will also help raise awareness of the importance and necessity of lifelong learning.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participate in accordance with the behaviours identified in Domain 1 of the CCF
2. Explain the legal requirements regulating the practice of pharmacy
3. Integrate knowledge and skills to ensure safe and effective practice
4. Critically review professional dilemma(s)
5. Rationalise professional decision-making
6. Illustrate the role of ethical principles in guiding professional behaviour
7. Justify the value of patient/person-centred practice
8. Demonstrate engagement in reflective practice and continuing professional development

Module 2: Personal Skills

Module Aims and Rationale

This module aims to help students develop their knowledge, skills, and attributes in CCF Domain 2, Personal Skills. The module will support students in acquiring personal skills, including decision-making skills and leadership skills. This module will also provide an introduction to the principles of leadership and change management, differentiating leadership from management and recognising the importance of team building. It will also focus on the development of generic skills of critical thinking, decision making, team working and communication. The module will be delivered in the context of the workplace and with a focus on quality improvement and patient safety.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participate in accordance with the behaviours identified in Domain 2 of the CCF
2. Explain how professional requirements affect decision-making
3. Integrate knowledge and skills to ensure safe and effective practice
4. Critically review professional skills development (self and others)
5. Demonstrate leadership skills within your current role
6. Tailor communication skills to specific contexts
7. Justify the need for multiple perspectives in decision making
8. Demonstrate engagement in reflective practice and continuing professional development

Module 3: Organisation and Management Skills

Module Aims and Rationale

This module aims to help students develop their knowledge, skills, and attributes in CCF Domain 6, Organisation and Management Skills. It will provide the opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate competencies related to self-management, workplace, human resources and financial management and quality assurance in the context of the practice environment.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participate in accordance with the behaviours identified in Domain 6 of the CCF
2. Explain systems and procedures used for performance management
3. Integrate knowledge and skills to ensure safe and effective practice
4. Critically evaluate principles of organisational behaviour and change management
5. Develop and work within documented procedures and policies
6. Apply frameworks for risk management in response to critical incidents
7. Justify decisions related to principles of pharmacoeconomic assessment
8. Demonstrate engagement in reflective practice and continuing professional development

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