



# APPEL

An Chleamhnacht um Fhoighlaim ó  
Thaithí Chleachtadh na Coqasíochta | Affiliation for Pharmacy  
Practice Experiential Learning



# 2023/24 Student Handbook

## 4<sup>th</sup>-Year Placement

## Table of Contents

What is APPEL? .....	3
Quick Guide to the 4 <sup>th</sup> -Year Placement .....	4
Abbreviations and Definitions .....	5
4 <sup>th</sup> -Year Placements – Background Information.....	6
4 <sup>th</sup> -Year Placements – Practical Information .....	6
Preparing for your 4 <sup>th</sup> -Year Placement .....	8
During your 4 <sup>th</sup> -Year Placement .....	11
Getting the Most from Your Placement .....	18
The APPEL Team Contact Details .....	23

RCSI

UCC

TCD



**APPEL**

An Chleamhnacht um Fhoghlaim ó  
Thaithi Chleachtadh na Cógaíochta

Affiliation for Pharmacy  
Practice Experiential Learning

## What is APPEL?

APPEL (Affiliation for Pharmacy Practice Experiential Learning) is 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 and National Coordinator of APPEL. The team is available to support both Trainers and students throughout their experiential learning placements.



# Quick Guide to the 4<sup>th</sup>-Year Placement

## ATTENDANCE

This is a statutory placement, which is defined in law as being 'at least four months' in duration. Thus, 100% attendance is required. You must report **any unexpected absences**, for example, due to illness, during the placement to both your **Training Establishment** **AND** to your **Practice Educator**.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Be aware of and comply with the APPEL Joint Schools Code of Conduct while on placement. The Code of Conduct is available [here](#).

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> October
- Summative assessment: completed by week ending 19<sup>th</sup> November

## CRITICAL INCIDENTS

You must report all critical incidents to your Practice Educator.

## PATIENT SAFETY

Patient safety is your primary concern on placement. If you become aware of a potential patient safety incident, alert your Preceptor/a member of staff at the Training Establishment immediately.

## PLACEMENT SCHEDULE

30 hours per week as agreed with your Preceptor between Monday and Friday (8am-6pm) (excluding bank holidays). In addition to the 30 hours on placement, students must set aside four consecutive hours between Monday and Friday (8am-6pm) each week for online academic activities.

## SUPPORT

See the end of this document for the contact details of your Practice Educators and the APPEL Operations team.

## TRAVEL

On occasion, a student undertaking an APPEL Experiential Learning Placement will be offered the opportunity to undertake travel away from their Training Establishment as part of their placement. This may include, for example, travel to a conference, an excursion to another placement site, or a placement related trip abroad. In line with APPEL's governance and insurance responsibilities relating to student placements it is necessary that all travel away from the Training Establishment is risk assessed by APPEL. Please contact the APPEL Office at [ops@appel.ie](mailto:ops@appel.ie) as soon as possible to start the approval process.

## 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 assess students’ competency in the relevant behaviours in the CCF.

**GDPR** – General Data Protection Regulation

**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/Preceptors, the students, and their School of Pharmacy.

**Preceptor** – A registered Pharmacist who is overseeing the experiential placement of (a) 4<sup>th</sup>-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 or 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.

**4<sup>th</sup>-Year Placement** – Experiential learning placement in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the five-year integrated pharmacy programme.

## 4<sup>th</sup>-Year Placements – Background Information

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 three Schools of Pharmacy.

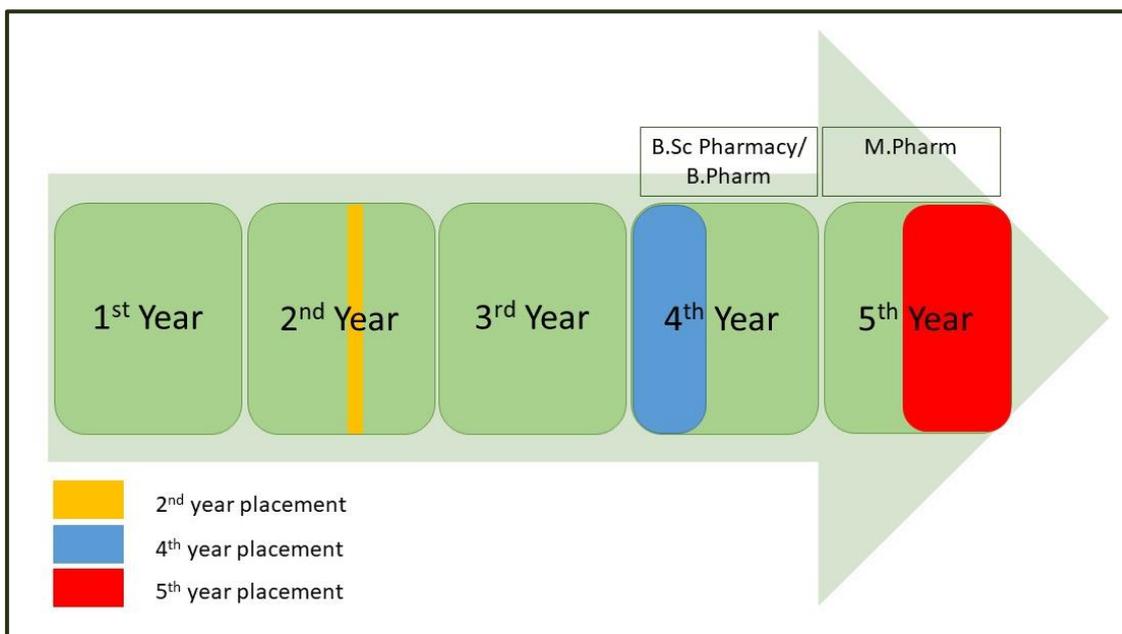


Fig. 1: Experiential learning placements overseen by APPEL in the 5-year integrated pharmacy programme

## 4<sup>th</sup>-Year Placements – Practical Information

### When?

28<sup>th</sup> August 2023 – 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023

### 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, you must be available for four consecutive hours per week, between 8am and 6pm on weekdays, to allow for uninterrupted time to complete academic work. You will attend placement for 30 hours each week according to a timetable agreed with the Training Establishment.

**Lunch break:** Breaks should be agreed with your Training Establishment, as appropriate. A lunch break must be taken, as agreed with your Training Establishment (this will usually be one hour in duration). Your lunch break is not counted as part of your 30 placement hours per week.

**Bank holidays:** APPEL placement is not scheduled on bank holidays. You are only required to complete 22.5 hours on weeks which include a bank holiday.

### What happens if I miss some placement time?

- This is a statutory placement, which is defined in law as being 'at least four months' in duration. Therefore, 100% attendance is required on placement.
- The APPEL timetable is flexible and can thus accommodate attendance at discretionary appointments or events during the placement week.

- You must complete 30 hours of placement each week. However, where required and in conjunction with your Preceptor, you 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, 35 hours during Week 1, and 25 hours during Week 2.
- It is anticipated that 'expected absences', such as attendance at events and appointments, will be managed by you, in conjunction with your Preceptor, within the flexible placement timetable.
- **You must inform both your Training Establishment and your PE if you are unexpectedly absent from placement**, e.g. due to illness or bereavement, or if you have a concern that you will not be able to attend placement for the requisite amount of time. The management of any absences from placement is a matter for your School of Pharmacy, who will manage absences in line with the School's policy on attendance.
- Your Preceptor will be asked to sign a 'Declaration of Satisfactory Attendance and Student Behaviour' to confirm that you have completed the requisite placement time (30 hours per week over four months, or equivalent).

**Remember:** One of the behaviours you will be assessed against is 'ensures punctuality and reliability'.

## What do I do if a critical incident occurs on placement?

For your safety and welfare, you must contact your Practice Educator or the APPEL Operations team if a critical incident arises while you are on 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 wellbeing of a student. Examples include, but are not limited to, death or serious illness of a member of staff or patient, fire, hold-up, needle stick injury, accident at work or burglary.

## What do I do if an opportunity to travel presents while on placement?

On occasion, a student undertaking an APPEL Experiential Learning Placement will be offered the opportunity to undertake travel away from their Training Establishment as part of their placement. This may include, for example, travel to a conference, an excursion to another placement site, or a placement related trip abroad. In line with APPEL's governance and insurance responsibilities relating to student placements it is necessary that all travel away from the Training Establishment is risk assessed by APPEL. Please contact the APPEL Office at [ops@appel.ie](mailto:ops@appel.ie) as soon as possible to start the approval process.

# Preparing for your 4<sup>th</sup>-Year Placement

## Dress code

An important aspect of being a professional is to dress appropriately for the workplace-based environment. Remember: dress code incorporates more than the clothes and shoes you wear – it is also important to ensure high standards of personal hygiene, wear appropriate levels of make-up/jewellery (if worn) and to ensure that hairstyle is appropriate for the environment.

**Please note:** There will be specific dress code requirements in some environments, e.g. short sleeves (for hand hygiene purposes), no ties (for health and safety purposes), no jewellery/make-up/watches/nail polish in some clinical/manufacturing environments. Ask your Preceptor regarding the specific dress code for your placement.

## GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

In the Student Placement Agreement, which outlines your responsibilities as a student on an experiential learning placement, it states: *“I understand the importance of confidentiality with regard to patient information and commercial business information, and I shall keep any of this information which I come across during my placement confidential.”*

GDPR came into force on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and strengthened the data privacy rights of all European citizens. It is imperative that you are familiar with your role in maintaining data privacy relating to your placement. Please undertake a short course on GDPR, offered free of charge by your HEI, prior to commencing your placement:

UCC students: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/gdpr/trainingandresources/>

RCSI students: <https://vle.rcsi.com/mod/page/view.php?id=231330>

Trinity students: <https://www.tcd.ie/itservices/vle/kb/overview-GDPRtraining.php>

## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

### APPEL'S EDI STATEMENT

APPEL as a consortium of the School of Pharmacy in UCC, RCSI School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences, and the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences in TCD, is committed to promoting the values of equality, embracing diversity and inclusivity throughout our organisation and to bringing awareness of EDI when collaborating with our stakeholders.

Our team will be valued and treated fairly regardless of age, civil status, family status, disability, gender, membership of the Traveller community, race, religion, sexual orientation.

We believe all stakeholders with whom we engage can, and should, rely on APPEL to treat them in a respectful, dignified manner, free from discrimination.

One of the six core principles of the [APPEL Joint Schools Code of Conduct](#) is to “conduct yourself in a manner which enhances the service provided to society and which will maintain the good name of your College and profession”. One important aspect of this principle is to treat others with consideration and respect.

While on placement, you will have an opportunity to promote inclusion and diversity to your patients and colleagues. You also have the responsibility to be aware of your own unconscious bias.

You can learn more about Overcoming Unconscious Bias and Dignity at Work in these three short courses on HSeLanD:

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

Just as it is your responsibility to treat patients and colleagues with dignity and respect, it is also your right to be treated as such. If you ever feel that this is not the case, please contact your Practice Educator or one of the student support services outlined in Table 3.

## Practice Setting-Specific Advice

Training Establishments from each practice setting have offered feedback and advice to future students, which will set students up for a successful placement.

**Community Pharmacy Placements:** Review your notes prior to undertaking placement, e.g. notes on over-the-counter medicines/counselling. Ensure you can use the hard copy of the BNF.

**Hospital Pharmacy Placements:** Review your notes prior to undertaking placement, e.g. pharmacology/clinical pharmacy notes. It may also be useful to revise any notes you have relating to Kardexes, lab reference ranges, renal dosing, accessing relevant guidelines, e.g. antimicrobial guidelines, opioid dosing guidelines, drugs in pregnancy guidelines etc. Ensure you can use the hard copy of the BNF.

**Industrial Pharmacy and Role-Emerging Practice Placements:** Computer literacy is an advantage for both industrial pharmacy and role-emerging practice placements. Your HEI offers Information Technology courses free of charge –please use the following link to enrol in the online course at your HEI:

**UCC students:** <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ittraining/icdl/enroll/>

**RCSI students:** <https://vle.rcsi.com/mod/page/view.php?id=231330> (Pharmacy Link)

**Trinity students:** <https://www.tcd.ie/itservices/training/linkedin-learning.php>

## Calibrating Expectations

**Induction:** Research shows that an essential step in setting up a successful placement is to have an induction meeting with your Preceptor. APPEL have created an [Induction and Training Plan](#), which you should complete, in conjunction with your Preceptor. At this induction meeting, tell your Preceptor about your learning goals for the placement, as well as the factors which are important to you to have a successful placement. Feedback from previous students encourages you to “express interest in particular sections you want to experience” and reiterates that “you get out what you put in, so take every opportunity”. At this meeting, you should also begin populating the training plan section of your [Induction and Training Plan](#) under the guidance of your Preceptor.

**Placement objectives:** There are a number of learning outcomes to be achieved by the end of your 4<sup>th</sup>-year placement. These have been set out by the Schools of Pharmacy and are related to your demonstration of 51 core competency behaviours. Keep your [training plan](#) as a living document during your placement to keep

track of activities you have undertaken, which demonstrate that you have been developing your competency at certain behaviours.

**Learning styles:** Each of us favours one or more styles of learning. In advance of your induction meeting, please undertake the [Honey and Mumford Learning Styles](#) Questionnaire to identify your preferred learning style. By sharing this information with your Preceptor, you and your Preceptor will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other's learning (and teaching) styles.

**Hints and tips from previous students:**

- "Ask questions and get stuck in" / "don't be afraid to ask for further guidance if you are ever unsure about something."
- "Prepare a more detailed plan of things...to learn and what...to achieve during placement."
- "Brush up on clinical knowledge from the past three years" / "Put a plan to revise what you have studied in college – link it with real life."
- "Be prepared for an environment different to community and be aware of the self-motivation required to complete tasks in an industry setting"
- "It is not about knowledge; it is about skills."

## During your 4th-Year Placement

### Competency Assessment

While on placement, you must achieve a level 3 in relevant behaviours from three domains of the PSI's Core Competency Framework (CCF):

1. Domain 1 (Professional Practice)
2. Domain 2 (Personal Skills)
3. Domain 6 (Organisation and Management Skills)

'Level 3' means that you demonstrate expected standard practice with occasional lapses, i.e. 51-84% of the time.

There will be two Competency Assessments during your placement:

- **Formative:** Week ending 1st October
- **Summative:** Week ending 19<sup>th</sup> November

It is important to remember that **competency is demonstrated through actions and behaviour**, i.e. a student with excellent knowledge of communications theory may not have developed excellent communication skills, and a student with little knowledge of communications theory may be an excellent communicator. The activities you undertake on placement will contribute to your development of competency. If you are experiencing any issues with competency achievement, contact your Practice Educator.

The [Standards for APPEL Experiential Learning Placements](#) states that you and your Preceptor must complete a [training plan](#) during placement to ensure that you are given the opportunity to achieve all the requisite behaviours within the required timeframe. It is important to keep your training plan as a living document throughout your placement, i.e. you should update it regularly and keep track of all the activities you have undertaken, which demonstrate that you are building competency in the 51 relevant behaviours.

### Formative and Summative Competency Assessments

The difference between the formative and summative Competency Assessments can be summarised as follows:

**Formative Assessment:** This type of assessment is also known as assessment *for* learning, to allow you and your Preceptor to identify behaviours that you need to practise and improve upon and to support your competency development on placement. There is no expectation that students will have reached the required standard of competency by the formative assessment. The ratings achieved at this point **do not** contribute towards your overall assessment outcome.

**Deadline:** Week ending 1st October

The timing has been chosen to allow you and your Preceptor sufficient time to identify learning opportunities for all behaviours that do not meet the required standard (level 3) at this point.

**Summative Assessment:** This type of assessment is also known as assessment *of* learning. This Competency Assessment is the final one, and it is mandatory to achieve the required standard to progress in the three online modules.

**Deadline:** Week ending 19th November

**Focused Training Plans:** If you have not achieved a level 3 by the end of week 12, you and your Preceptor need to contact a Practice Educator immediately. The Practice Educator will support you both in developing a focused training plan for the final four weeks of the placement to give you every opportunity to reach a level 3 by the end of the placement.

The final Competency Assessment will remain open until the end of your placement to allow your Preceptor to amend any scores given at week 12 if required.

## Competency Assessments Ratings

Both you and your Preceptor will use the rating system described in Table 1 below. You are expected to achieve a level 3 for each of the 51 behaviours by the summative Competency Assessment. If any of the behaviours are not at a level 3 by the summative Competency Assessment, a focused training plan will be developed to give you the opportunity to build your competency in the specific behaviours which were rated below 3.

**Table 1: Competency Assessment Ratings**

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%

*Adapted from the Competency Development & Evaluation Group Framework (CoDEG)*

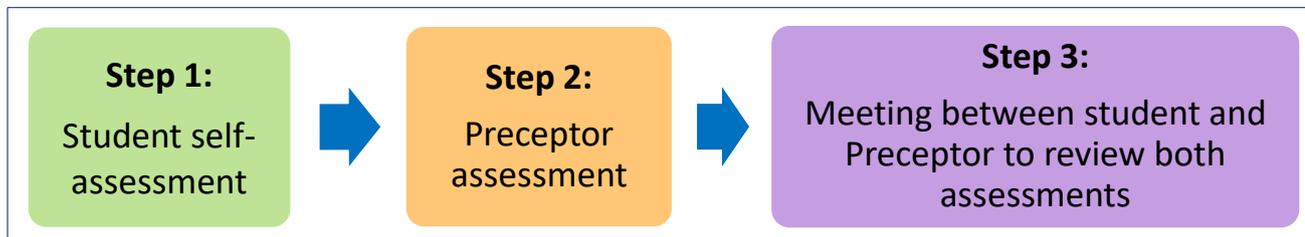
### Behaviours Rated as ‘Not Applicable’

The behaviours that will be assessed in each Competency Assessment are taken from Domains 1, 2 and 6 of the PSI’s CCF. However, you may notice that your Competency Assessment does not contain all behaviours from each of these domains – some have been removed from the Competency Assessment for your 4<sup>th</sup>-year placement, as they may not be possible to achieve in the 4<sup>th</sup>-year placement setting, or they may not apply to all practice settings. The behaviours that you will be assessed against can be found in the [training plan](#). However, if you and/or your Preceptor believe that any of these behaviours are **not applicable** in your placement setting, please take note of the following guidance:

1. Review Table 2 below, which contains ideas for developing competency in certain behaviours. The behaviours listed in this table are the most commonly rated as ‘Not Applicable’. The examples of activities listed in the table may prompt you and your Preceptor to find an activity that is suitable in your placement environment.
2. If you still believe the behaviour is not applicable, contact your Practice Educator to discuss.

**Please note:** The Schools of Pharmacy reserve the right to further engage with students whose Competency Assessments indicate that a number of behaviours could not be demonstrated in their placement, i.e. a number of behaviours were rated as Not Applicable.

## Competency Assessment Process



**Step 1** You will complete a self-assessment exercise and assign yourself a rating in each of the specified behaviours, based on what you consider your competency rating to be.

**Step 2** Your Preceptor will assign you a rating in each of the specified competency behaviours based on their experience of your competency.

**Step 3** A meeting is organised between you and your Preceptor to review the respective ratings together. The following should be discussed as part of this meeting:

- Your Preceptor should provide constructive feedback that (i) identifies those areas where you have performed well, (ii) highlights where improvement is needed and (iii) how this may be achieved.
- Identify the areas where you are not at the required rating; explore why this may be. Have you not yet had opportunities to develop this competency, or do you require more practice in certain activities to develop the competency? Consider and discuss with your Preceptor activities that may provide opportunities to develop these competencies and document these activities in the training plan.

### *Helpful Hints*

In the meeting between you and your Preceptor, we recommend that you focus on:

- Behaviours in which your competency level is lower than the required standard.
- Behaviours in which there is a discrepancy in the competency level assessed by you and your Preceptor.

If you and your Preceptor cannot identify opportunities for you to support your competency development in one or more behaviours, contact your Practice Educator.

**Table 2: Ideas for Developing Competency**

Competency Behaviour	Community Pharmacy	Hospital Pharmacy	Industry	Role-Emerging Practice Placements
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 pharmacy environment	Dispensing check. Relaying accurate information to other healthcare professionals with medicines queries. Discussing potential clinical interventions with Preceptor/pharmacist .	Dispensing check. Relaying accurate information to other healthcare professionals with medicines queries. Discussing potential clinical interventions with Preceptor/pharmacist .	Complying with SOPs, e.g. handwashing and correct garbing procedures before entering manufacturing areas. *within the placement environment	Research-based – accuracy in measurements and in recording lab results accurately. Following SOPs. *within the placement environment

Competency Behaviour	Community Pharmacy	Hospital Pharmacy	Industry	Role-Emerging Practice Placements
6.1.7 Reflects on and demonstrates learning from critical incidents	Review error log and present findings to team on strategies implemented to reduce risk.	Review error log and present 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. Discuss how to deal with it with Preceptor.
6.3.4 Supports and contributes to staff training and continuing professional development	Training staff on a new SOP that has been implemented in the pharmacy, e.g. request for Sumatriptan.	Give clinical case presentation to department staff.	Give presentation to site staff on medicines produced at plant – mode of action, indications.	Give presentation on progress of research project at seminar.
6.5.3 Contributes to the development, implementation, maintenance and training of staff on standard operating procedures	Following SOPs for dispensing, OTC consultations etc. Draft SOP for supply of new 'P' medicine and train staff on it.	Following SOPs for taking a medicines information query, dispensing a medication etc.	Training staff on implementation of a SOP by demonstrating how they adhere to it in their activities.	Drafting or reviewing SOP (e.g. GDPR).
6.5.4 Contributes to regular audit activities and reports and acts upon findings	Partake in Pharmacy Assessment System and report on findings to Preceptor.	Audit of near-miss log – report on findings to Preceptor.	Participate in regular unannounced GMP walk-downs and communicate findings at team meeting.	Complete audit of SOP training – communicate reminders to those who still have to complete required training.

## Competency Assessment Queries

### **1. Is level 3 the highest rating a Preceptor can give for their student in the 4<sup>th</sup>-year placement?**

No, the minimum requirement in the 4<sup>th</sup>-year placement is level 3. If a student consistently demonstrates the expected standard practice with rare lapses, they can be rated at level 4.

### **2. What do I do if I am achieving level 1 and 2 in the formative assessment?**

The formative assessment is an assessment *for* learning. The purpose of a formative assessment is to help Preceptors and students identify the student's current competency and discuss opportunities to help the student achieve the required level of competency before the summative assessment – you should update your training plan accordingly. By the formative assessment, you will only have completed five weeks of your placement and may not have been exposed to many opportunities to develop your competency. If you have any concerns, contact your Practice Educator.

### **3. Why is the final assessment completed at the end of week 12, when the placement lasts 16 weeks?**

The final assessment is completed at the end of week 12 to allow time for a focused training period during the last 4 weeks if a student is having difficulty achieving the required level of competency for certain behaviours.

### **4. When can you use the Not Applicable (N/A) rating?**

The behaviours assessed as part of the 4<sup>th</sup>-Year Competency Assessment were chosen as it was believed they could be demonstrated in all practice settings. On the exceptional occasion that a behaviour cannot be demonstrated in a specific Training Establishment, the Preceptor can rate that behaviour as Not Applicable. This rating can be used when the student cannot be exposed to or will not have the opportunity to be exposed to that behaviour in the Training Establishment. Feedback from Preceptors indicated that some Preceptors found that certain behaviours initially did not appear to be applicable to their setting, but on taking a wider view of the competency, they often found ways to assess the behaviour. Examples of how some behaviours can be demonstrated can be found in Table 2 above, as well as in the answers to queries 5 and 6 below. Practice Educators are happy to speak with you and/or your Preceptor regarding ideas for developing competency in certain behaviours in your setting.

**Please note:** The Schools of Pharmacy reserve the right to further engage with students whose Competency Assessments indicate that a number of behaviours could not be demonstrated in their placement, i.e. behaviours were rated as 'Not Applicable'.

### **5. How do competency behaviours apply in industry placements?**

Preceptors working in industry are well placed to determine how the behaviours of the CCF apply in their settings. Previous Preceptors have kindly provided examples of activities they have undertaken; these can be found on pages 16 and 17. If you or your Preceptor have any queries regarding whether certain competency behaviours are applicable in industry settings, a Practice Educator can discuss this with you. For example, we received queries relating to the application of behaviour 6.5.3 (contributes to the development, implementation, maintenance and training of staff on standard operating procedures, as appropriate to their level of responsibility), which was achieved by students in some Training Establishments reviewing and approving cleaning documentation including cleaning batch records and cleaning protocols.

## 6. How do competency behaviours apply in REP placements?

Preceptors working in REP are well placed to determine how the behaviours of the CCF apply in their settings. Previous Preceptors have kindly provided examples of activities they have undertaken; these can be found on pages 16 and 17. If you or your Preceptor have any queries regarding whether certain competency behaviours are applicable in your setting, a Practice Educator can discuss this with you. For example, we have received queries relating to the application of competency behaviours relating to 'patient-centred care' (1.1.1 and 1.1.2) in a research-based REP setting. These behaviours were achieved by reading original research articles relating to the pharmacological receptor being researched, with a view to understanding the types of patients who could benefit from the treatment being researched and to understand how the research could translate into a safe and effective medicine for these patients – also see Table 2.

## Support

APPEL's role is to support students, Preceptors, and Training Establishments before, during, and after placements. Your Practice Educator is your first point of contact. The APPEL Operations team is also available if you need additional support or are unable to contact your Practice Educator. Contact details for APPEL team members are available at the end of this handbook.

APPEL receives many queries, and no question is too small to ask. Examples of queries that APPEL has previously received include:

- Unexpected absences from placement due to illness, bereavement or other
- Reasonable accommodations required due to personal health circumstances
- Critical incidents arising on placements, e.g. robbery in the pharmacy
- Support with finding opportunities to develop competency



**TOP TIP:** If you have a question, check our website [www.appel.ie](http://www.appel.ie) for useful information. Practice Educators are happy to answer any question also, so make sure to stay in contact.

## Getting the Most from Your Placement

In a Canadian study (Jackson, 2015), the strategies employed by pharmacy students to ensure success in their placements included:

- Appear interested at all times and show that you value this experiential opportunity.
- Show enthusiasm for learning.
- Demonstrate independence.
- Show initiative and make contributions in the experiential setting.
- Be inquisitive, but expect to answer (most of) your own questions.
- Never make anything up!
- Integrate yourself into the placement environment.
- Embrace spontaneous learning experiences.
- Be respectful of the Training Establishment environment.
- Be appreciative of the time and energy being invested in you by your Preceptor and other staff members of the Training Establishment.
- Consider your experiential placement as an extended job interview.

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Jackson, L. D. (2015). Strategies pharmacy students can use to ensure success in an experiential placement. *Can Pharm J (Ott)*, 148(6), 308-313.

There are many supports available to you through your HEI – please see Table 3. Issues/concerns raised by students will only be communicated by Practice Educators to those who need to be made aware (e.g. Head of School, APPEL Director and National Coordinator, Student Support Services, or others as appropriate). It is important to remember that we can't provide support if we are unaware there is an issue. Any supports which are available to you during your time in university are also available to you while you are on placement, i.e. your mentor/tutor and year co-ordinator.

**Please note:** Your Practice Educator will inform you before passing information on.

**Table 3: Signposting Support Services for Students**

Query/Concern relates to:	UCC	RCSI	Trinity
Competency development, ideas for learning activities, Competency Assessments, if you are concerned that some behaviours may be rated as 'not applicable.'	<a href="mailto:ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie">ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie</a> (Ruth McCarthy)	<a href="mailto:practiceeducators@rcsi.ie">practiceeducators@rcsi.ie</a> ( <a href="mailto:annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie">annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie</a> or <a href="mailto:jameshoran@rcsi.ie">jameshoran@rcsi.ie</a> )	<a href="mailto:enisheac@tcd.ie">enisheac@tcd.ie</a> (Eimear Ni Sheachnasaigh)
Experiential learning, e.g. placement timetable, delayed induction, absence from placement	<a href="mailto:ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie">ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie</a> (Ruth McCarthy)	<a href="mailto:practiceeducators@rcsi.ie">practiceeducators@rcsi.ie</a> ( <a href="mailto:annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie">annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie</a> or <a href="mailto:jameshoran@rcsi.ie">jameshoran@rcsi.ie</a> )	<a href="mailto:enisheac@tcd.ie">enisheac@tcd.ie</a> (Eimear Ni Sheachnasaigh)
Proposed Preceptor changes/ Proposed Training Establishment changes/ Absence of Preceptor for >4 weeks.	<a href="mailto:ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie">ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie</a> (Ruth McCarthy) OR <a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a>	<a href="mailto:practiceeducators@rcsi.ie">practiceeducators@rcsi.ie</a> ( <a href="mailto:annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie">annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie</a> or <a href="mailto:jameshoran@rcsi.ie">jameshoran@rcsi.ie</a> ) OR <a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a>	<a href="mailto:enisheac@tcd.ie">enisheac@tcd.ie</a> (Eimear Ni Sheachnasaigh) OR <a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a>
If you have any concerns that you might not be able to meet the attendance requirements of the placement (e.g. if you are asked by your Preceptor to stay at home from placement if you are following Public Health advice etc.)	<a href="mailto:ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie">ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie</a> (Ruth McCarthy)	<a href="mailto:practiceeducators@rcsi.ie">practiceeducators@rcsi.ie</a> ( <a href="mailto:annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie">annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie</a> or <a href="mailto:jameshoran@rcsi.ie">jameshoran@rcsi.ie</a> )	<a href="mailto:enisheac@tcd.ie">enisheac@tcd.ie</a> (Eimear Ni Sheachnasaigh)
Critical Incident	<a href="mailto:ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie">ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie</a> (Ruth McCarthy) OR <a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a>	<a href="mailto:practiceeducators@rcsi.ie">practiceeducators@rcsi.ie</a> ( <a href="mailto:annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie">annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie</a> or <a href="mailto:jameshoran@rcsi.ie">jameshoran@rcsi.ie</a> ) OR <a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a>	<a href="mailto:enisheac@tcd.ie">enisheac@tcd.ie</a> (Eimear Ni Sheachnasaigh) OR <a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a>
Accessing VLE, technical queries relating to VLE	<a href="mailto:ops@appel.ie">ops@appel.ie</a>		
Discussion forums, word counts, learning units, submission deadlines for assignments on VLE	Relevant academic module co-ordinator		
Module run by HEI	Relevant module co-ordinator at HEI		
Medical illness	Student health / GP		
Student wellbeing; e.g. feeling anxious, overwhelmed, isolated or otherwise requiring mental health supports	Student counselling and development Chaplaincy Niteline Peer Support *links to services <a href="#">here</a>	Counselling Service Clinical Psychology Service Phone: +353 1 283 9366 Email: <a href="mailto:cpslmerrion@gmail.com">cpslmerrion@gmail.com</a> CoMPPAS Student Assistance programme, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, by calling: freephone 1800 995 955 (or to access from out of Ireland: +44 2037017293) <a href="mailto:swo@rcsi.ie">swo@rcsi.ie</a> (student welfare officer)	Student Counselling Services: <a href="https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/">https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/</a> 24-hour crisis text line text: TCD50808
Reasonable accommodations	Disability Support Services	Learning Access and Facilitation services <a href="mailto:Learningsupport@rcsi.ie">Learningsupport@rcsi.ie</a>	Disability Services: <a href="https://www.tcd.ie/disability/">https://www.tcd.ie/disability/</a>
Equality, diversity and inclusion, e.g. discrimination based on ethnicity, religion etc.	<a href="mailto:ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie">ruth.mccarthy@ucc.ie</a> (Ruth McCarthy) or <a href="#">Student Supports UCC</a>	<a href="mailto:practiceeducators@rcsi.ie">practiceeducators@rcsi.ie</a> ( <a href="mailto:annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie">annteresamorgan@rcsi.ie</a> or <a href="mailto:jameshoran@rcsi.ie">jameshoran@rcsi.ie</a> ) OR <a href="mailto:swo@rcsi.ie">swo@rcsi.ie</a> (student welfare officer)	<a href="mailto:enisheac@tcd.ie">enisheac@tcd.ie</a> (Eimear Ni Sheachnasaigh) Equality Office TCD <a href="https://www.tcd.ie/equality/contact/">https://www.tcd.ie/equality/contact/</a>

## Code of Conduct

As you are a registered student at your School of Pharmacy while on placement, you must adhere to the APPEL Joint Schools Code of Conduct for all placement-related activities (this is available on [www.appel.ie/resources](http://www.appel.ie/resources)). The six core principles of the current Code of Conduct are:

- 1 Your primary concern must be to maintain and improve the health, wellbeing, care and safety of patients.
  - *For example, ensure that patient safety is your primary concern – speak to the appropriate person if you think you have made a mistake.*
- 2 Develop your professional competence, skills and standing to bring health gain and value to the community and society.
  - *For example, take responsibility for your learning on placement and only practise within your limits of competence.*
- 3 Be honest and trustworthy and show respect for others.
  - *For example, protect patient, prescriber and business confidentiality.*
- 4 Conduct yourself in a manner which enhances the service provided and maintains the good name of your profession.
  - *For example, communicate effectively and appropriately with patients/customers, your Preceptor, staff at the Training Establishment and APPEL staff while on practice placement.*
- 5 Maintain your professional knowledge and competence.
  - *For example, engage with all opportunities to learn and develop while on practice placement.*
- 6 Be aware of your obligations under the Code of Conduct and do not breach the Code.
  - *For example, comply with all APPEL policies while on practice placement, i.e. the terms and conditions set out in the Student Placement Agreement.*

## Student Responsibilities – What are my responsibilities as a pharmacy student on placement?

As a pharmacy student on placement, you have responsibilities, some of which are set out below. Please read the following section carefully and seek clarification, if needed, from your Practice Educator. Any deviation from these responsibilities could be a potential breach of the Code of Conduct.

**Please note that a student on their experiential learning placement cannot act as, or act as the replacement for, a qualified pharmacist.**

## Responsibilities

- Be aware of the terms and conditions of the APPEL placement, which are contained in the Student Placement Agreement ([www.appel.ie/resources](http://www.appel.ie/resources)).
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Training Establishment in which you are placed.
- Ensure that you are directly supervised when carrying out any activity that could affect patient safety. Report any potential patient safety incident to a member of the Training Establishment staff immediately. Patient safety is the most important consideration while on placement. **A student on their experiential learning placement cannot act as, or act as the replacement for, a qualified pharmacist.**
- Maintain professional standards of behaviour at all times.
- Attend placement according to the APPEL placement schedule.
- Report all unexpected absences, e.g. due to illness or bereavement, to your Training Establishment AND your Practice Educator.
- In conjunction with your Preceptor, arrange your placement schedule to accommodate anticipated absences where possible, e.g. attendance at a planned appointment.
- Contact a Practice Educator if a critical incident occurs while you are on placement.
- Contact a Practice Educator if you believe that your placement is not being provided in line with APPEL's guidelines, if you have any concern regarding your health, safety, ability to achieve competencies, or any placement-related queries.
- Treat all staff with respect and courtesy. It is essential that you never say or do anything to discredit the Training Establishment, the staff of the Training Establishment, APPEL or your HEI.
- Inform APPEL of any connections to your Training Establishment or Trainer, which only become apparent when you are on placement.
- Dress and personal appearance must be neat, clean and appropriate for the placement environment. You should also be aware that jewellery, piercings and false nails/nail polish are considered unacceptable in some workplaces, as these may pose a health and safety risk.
- Respect privacy and confidentiality, in line with GDPR. This rule applies to all information you are privy to. Specifically, you are required to:
  - Respect patient and prescriber confidentiality.
  - Keep confidential all business matters relating to the Training Establishment.
  - Treat all verbal discussions with strict confidentiality, during and after placement, and be aware of the volume at which you speak.
  - Observe data protection legislation, i.e. GDPR, which includes undertaking your activities in a manner that preserves the privacy of individuals' personal details, e.g. names, phone numbers, addresses, etc.
- Never mislead or allow customers/patients/Training Establishment staff to think that you are a registered pharmacist. Wear your student badge at all times while on placement.
- Take all due care with Training Establishment equipment and other property.
- Turn off any mobile phones/tablets you have with you. Access them only on breaks and in appropriate locations, unless requested otherwise by a staff member at the Training Establishment.
- Contact APPEL regarding any matter that may require consideration in the arrangement of your placement or the activities you undertake during your placement, e.g. pregnancy, allergy, infection etc.

## Placement Governance

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, to ensure that placements are a rewarding and enjoyable experience for all.

### STUDENTS

You are required to:

- Sign and abide by the Student Placement Agreement ([www.appel.ie/resources](http://www.appel.ie/resources))
- Read the Student Handbook
- Attend the Pre-Placement Preparation Seminars and undertake all designated pre-placement activities

### PRECEPTORS

Your Preceptor is required to:

- Undertake APPEL Preceptor accreditation
- Complete the required training
- Be a PSI-registered pharmacist
- Be in regular contact with their student (at least one communication every 4 weeks)
- Have a maximum absence during placement of 4 weeks
- Sign the Declaration of Satisfactory Attendance and Student Behaviour at the end of the placement to confirm that each student has met the attendance requirements of the placement and to confirm that the Preceptor has no concerns about the student's fitness to register as a pharmacist.

### TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS

Your Training Establishment is required to:

- Undertake APPEL accreditation – placement agreement, declarations, insurance, vetting, health and safety, suitable placement environment, provides induction and training etc.



**TOP TIP:** At your initial meeting with your Preceptor, ask him/her how you should contact them if you have a question that cannot be answered by another staff member at the Training Establishment.

# The APPEL Team Contact Details

## APPEL Operations Team

Phone: 01 402 5129

Email: [ops@appel.ie](mailto:ops@appel.ie)



**Katherine Morrow**

Director and National  
Coordinator APPEL



**Rachel Hamilton**

Operations Manager



**Balazs Balogh**

Operations  
Coordinator



**James Horan**

Operations Support  
Pharmacist

## UCC Practice Educator



Ruth McCarthy

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## RCSI Practice Educators



Anne Teresa Morgan

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James Horan

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087 7044 119

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## TCD Practice Educator



Eimear Ní Sheachnasaigh

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087 7003 899