Supervisor Handbook

2nd-Year Placement



Table of Contents

Quick Guide to the 2nd-Year Placement 3
Background information 4
Before the Placement 5
Preparing for your student's placement 5
During the Placement 6
Contacting APPEL 7
Student Conduct 8
Placement Workbook 9
At the End of the Placement 10
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion 10
Open Disclosure 10
Frequently Asked Questions 11
Abbreviations and Definitions 13
Contact Details 14



Quick Guide to the 2nd-Year Placement

PLACEMENT SCHEDULE

UCC/Trinity/RCSI	11th to 22nd January 2026	Monday to Friday 09.30-17.00 with one hour lunch

Please note: Any change to the placement schedule needs to be discussed approved by APPEL

ATTENDANCE

- **100% attendance** is expected from students on placement.
- If a student is absent during placement hours for any reason, please inform the APPEL office by emailing ops@appel.ie.

CODE OF CONDUCT and CRITICAL INCIDENTS

- Students must comply with the Schools of Pharmacy Code of Conduct while on placement. The Code of Conduct is available here. Breaches of the Code of Conduct must be reported to the APPEL Operations team or a Practice Educator as soon as possible.
- 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 Operations team or a Practice Educator as soon as possible.

PLACEMENT WORKBOOK

Students are required to complete a workbook while on placement. The purpose of the workbook is to support the student in achieving the placement learning outcomes:

1. Observe, appreciate, and document the steps involved in the safe dispensing and supply of medicines
2. Observe, appreciate, and document the skills and behaviors of the pharmacist
3. Link documented activities to the PSI's Core Competency Framework (CCF)

SUPPORT

If you have any queries contact a Practice Educator or the APPEL Office (contact details are available on the APPEL website or at the end of this handbook).

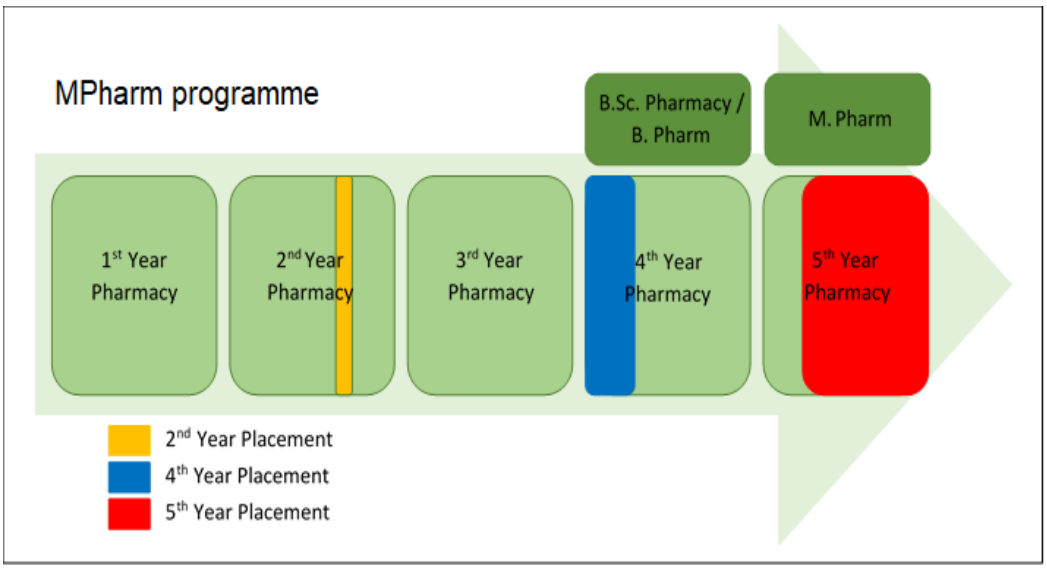
Background information

What is APPEL?

APPEL (Affiliation for Pharmacy Practice Experiential Learning) is responsible for the management of the common experiential learning placements of the integrated pharmacy programmes in Ireland. It is overseen by the APPEL Board, consisting of the Heads of the Schools of Pharmacy. The APPEL team consists of Practice Educators and the Operations Team, led by the Director and National Coordinator of APPEL.

The 5-year Integrated Pharmacy Programme

Students on the 5-year integrated pharmacy programme remain registered at their university for all five years and undertake three experiential learning placements. These are workplace-based learning experiences, which are overseen by APPEL on behalf of the Schools. The underpinning philosophy of experiential learning placements is that students remain as students while on placement.



This early practical experience helps students to:

- Contextualise their theoretical studies from the lecture theatre and practical classes.
- Learn new skills and competencies.
- Understand the range of roles undertaken by pharmacists.
- Engage with pharmacists as potential future colleagues across a breadth of practice settings.

"It contextualised my learning (…) and helped me understand what (…) pharmacy involves beyond University-gained knowledge."

2nd Year Student

Before the Placement

For you and your student to get the most out of the experience, it is important to be prepared for your student's placement. Preparation as a Supervisor ensures an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all.

Practice Educators prepare students in the following areas:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Code of Conduct
- Mobile phone use
- Professional dress
- Data protection and confidentiality
- Learning activities (placement workbook)

Students are required to complete Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Training in line with HSE guidelines for student placements.

Preparing for your student's placement

1

Trainer Training

Information about the APPEL placement programme is available on the APPEL website (www.appel.ie/resources). Supervisors are encouraged to complete APPEL Trainer Training before the placement begins, however, this training is optional and is not a requirement of offering a 2nd year placement.

2

Meet the student at their pre-placement visit

APPEL requires students to phone their Supervisor in advance of their placement. A pre-placement visit can be organised if this suits the Supervisor.
The aim of this visit is to ensure that students know how to get to their placements, know what to wear, etc. You could also ask the student any questions you might have, for example:

- ✓ Previous relevant experience - this may be the student's first experience in a pharmacy/department.
- ✓ Confirm when the student will commence their placement, and ensure you have their contact details.
- ✓ Ensure the student has correct contact details for your pharmacy/department.
- ✓ Discuss the plan for Day 1 of placement (see Student Induction below).
- ✓ Introduce the student to members of your team.
- ✓ Ensure both you and your student have access to your student's Practice Educators' name(s), contact details and contact details for the APPEL office. These are available on the APPEL website and at the end of this handbook.

3

Plan Student Induction

As most of us in APPEL are pharmacists, we understand how busy a pharmacy can be,. For this reason, a planned induction is required for your student (some aspects of this could be delegated to other staff members). The induction could include:

1. The layout and facilities, and explaining a typical daily routine.
2. Information about your pharmacy/department and discussing their role while on placement – what are your expectations, what are their expectations?
3. Provision of key policies e.g. security, data protection and confidentiality, child safeguarding statement, open disclosure policy.

Students should receive a health and safety induction. Ask your student to help you plan for their placement - what would they like to do, what would you like them to do? Agree together some learning opportunities for when your pharmacy/department is busy. **The APPEL 2nd-Year Induction Plan** is available on the resources page of the APPEL website (Placement Provider Resources).

During the Placement

Supervision

All students on placement must be supervised by a PSI-registered pharmacist. It should be clear to staff, patients and customers that the student is not a registered pharmacist. Students have been provided with a **name badge**, which identifies them as pharmacy students. If you, are not present for the full placement, please ensure that the pharmacist in charge is aware of the student's presence and can identify suitable activities for the student to observe/undertake.

Remember! This is the first experiential learning placement of the 5-year pharmacy programme. For many students, it will be their first experience of a pharmacy dispensary. It may also be their first time engaging in a workplace setting and perhaps their first encounter with patients. Students generally approach the placement with great excitement and enthusiasm, but it can also be a daunting experience, and they may be nervous and possibly a little overwhelmed, especially at the start of the placement. Despite the learning acquired in lectures, labs, role-plays and simulations in university, students are often surprised by the fast-paced, high-pressured and demanding environments typical of pharmacies, and they may feel uncomfortable interrupting you or other staff members to ask questions or clarify what they should be doing, especially when the pharmacy is busy. **Some students will endeavour to be proactive, but this may be difficult for those unfamiliar with the day-to-day activities of a pharmacy.** Experience from previous placements has shown that a comprehensive induction, as early as possible in the placement, as well as a good understanding of your student's placement expectations, can be invaluable in ensuring the student settles into the placement environment and the pharmacy team and that a successful placement is experienced by all.

To ensure that students are adequately supported on placement, the designated Supervisor should be present as much as possible during the placement. In the case of your absence
please ensure that the student is adequately supervised and provided with suitable activities that support

the student in completing their workbook. The 'Frequently Asked Questions' section provides suggested learning opportunities for students. Please note that these activities are suggestions only and may or may not be suitable for a student in your workplace. **Students must be appropriately supervised at all times in the pharmacy.**



Role of the Supervisor

As a Supervisor, you will guide and support your student's learning experience. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and must complete the **placement workbook**. However, at this early stage of their studies they require supervision and may have questions for you. You can also share your insights as an experienced professional; students will benefit greatly from their interactions with you as a professional role model.

Contacting APPEL

Get in touch if you have any queries and, if any of the following circumstances arise while your student is on placement:

- **Absence** – If your student is unable to attend placement during the scheduled placement hours, for any reason, please contact the APPEL office (ops@appel.ie). This includes absence for medical/dental appointments, illness, bereavement, university club commitments, etc.
- **Critical Incident** – For your student's safety and welfare, please contact a Practice Educator or the APPEL office if a critical incident arises when the student is on placement. A critical incident is any actual or alleged event or situation that creates a significant risk of substantial or serious harm to a student's physical or mental health, safety or well-being. These events are very rare, examples of which include, but are not limited to, injury to the student, death or serious illness of a member of staff or patient, fire, needle stick injury, accident at work or burglary.

Student Conduct

Students are required to adhere to the **APPEL Joint Student Code of Conduct** (www.appel.ie/resources). The **six principles** of the Code are:

1	**Your primary concern must be to maintain and improve the health, well-being, care and safety of patients.** *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.** *Example: Take responsibility for your learning on placement and only practice within your limits of competence.*
3	**Be honest and trustworthy and show respect to others.** *Example: Protect patient, prescriber and business confidentiality.*
4	**Conduct yourself in a manner that enhances the service provided and maintains the good name of your profession.** *Example: Communicate effectively and appropriately with patients/customers, your Supervisor, staff at the Training Establishment, and APPEL staff while on placement.*
5	**Maintain your professional knowledge and competence.** *Example: Engage with all opportunities to learn and develop while on placement.*
6	**Be aware of your obligations under the Code of Conduct and do not breach the Code.** *Example: Comply with all APPEL policies while on placement i.e., the terms and conditions set out in the Student Placement Agreement.*



If you become aware of any potential breaches of the APPEL Joint Student Code of Conduct or any potential patient safety incidents during the placement, please contact APPEL. **At this early stage of a student's professional career, it is important that such behaviours are highlighted to students, so that they can be given support to help them develop**. Discussion with a Practice Educator does not necessarily mean it will impact your student's progression, but it will allow an opportunity for your student to receive feedback and support.

Placement Workbook

Students have to complete a workbook. This provides focus and direction to students' learning. Students are asked to observe and document the activities of the pharmacist and other members of the pharmacy team for their learning and development. Students may also participate in additional pharmacy activities, under appropriate supervision, with the permission of their Supervisor. It is important to note that students will only have completed about a quarter of their undergraduate training before this placement. Students from all Schools of Pharmacy will have covered some biology, physiology, microbiology, biochemistry, chemistry, calculations, pharmaceutics, pharmacognosy, practice of pharmacy and pharmacology.

The Schools of Pharmacy provide students with their workbooks. The learning activities are categorised under three main learning outcomes. There are set activities associated with each learning outcome, which students must either observe the pharmacist doing or undertake themselves under the supervision and guidance of the pharmacist. The students' learning activities are:

1

Observe, appreciate and document the steps involved in the safe dispensing and supply of medicines:

a. Follow a prescription journey, which encompasses all of the following steps: presentation, legal check, calculation, patient medication record entry, labelling and assembly, clinical check, risk management and monitoring
b. Follow a prescription journey for a drug with additional controls and identify how this differs from a regular prescription
c. Supply of non-prescription medicines
d. Sourcing of medicines and stock management

2

Observe, appreciate and document the skills and behaviours of the pharmacist

Focus on pharmacists in their capacity as a:

Collaborator	Communicator	Advisor
Manager	Life-long learner	

3

Link documented activities to the PSI's CCF

Link the activities you undertook/observed to the competencies of the CCF

At the End of the Placement

Supervisor's Report

Please complete the Supervisor's Report. This report is to capture the student's conduct and professionalism, confirm they completed the learning activities in a safe manner and to verify their full attendance. It enables you to **areas in which they could further develop and areas in which they performed well**. A brief discussion regarding your recommendations for their further development will be beneficial in helping t reflection on the placement experience and identify competencies and skills to focus on in future placements. Students will present you with this report.

Feedback

We will invite you to participate in an anonymous online questionnaire to get your views on what worked well and how we could improve things. Please do not hesitate to provide open and honest feedback, as you will know best how we can improve this experience for all. We also welcome direct contact from Supervisors who may prefer to provide feedback over the phone or via email (ops@appel.ie).

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

APPEL 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.
As a pharmacist and Trainer, we know you are committed to treating all patients, colleagues and students with dignity and respect. You can further explore these topics in these two short courses on HSeLanD:

- Equality and Diversity
- Dignity at Work (revised 2022)

Courses have also been signposted t o students. If you have any concerns about your student's behaviour in this respect, please contact a Practice Educator or the APPEL office.

Open Disclosure

Health care providers including Pharmacists in patient-facing, clinical settings have specific obligations under the National Open Disclosure Framework. All patient-facing pharmacists must ensure they are aware of the new legislation, the framework, and the overall expectations should a patient safety incident or adverse event arise. You can learn about Open Disclosure if you undertake the optional APPEL Trainer Training course, but you can explore this topic further by consulting the references signposted in this training, or by visiting the PSI website.

Frequently Asked Questions

How are students allocated to their 2nd-year placement?

For the 2nd-year placement, students are assigned to their placement based their geographical preferences.

Can I get a good student back?

Students can return to a pharmacy/department for either the 4th or 5th-year placement (but not for both). This is laid out in Statutory Instrument No. 377 of 2014.

How do we manage patient and colleague expectations?

The student can be introduced to patients and colleagues as a pharmacy student on placement as part of their undergraduate training. The student has been provided with a name badge. Feedback from previous 2nd-year students indicated that students felt they greatly benefited from the opportunity to improve their communication skills with patients in a "real-life" environment. Under supervision, students are encouraged to interact with patients and reflect on these interactions in the context of their own professional development. Students are reminded before they go on placement to be mindful not to treat the patients they meet as "case studies" but to be respectful, courteous, and empathetic.

How can my experience of supervising a 2nd-year student become part of my own CPD?

APPEL has developed sample CPD cycles based on feedback that pharmacists shared regarding their experiences of supervising students. These sample CPD cycles are available on the APPEL website under Placement Provider Resources.

What can a student do when the pharmacy team is busy?

When the pharmacy/department becomes busy students could take advantage of these times to **complete their placement workbook**. Some students may complete their learning activities quite quickly and be eager to avail of additional learning opportunities.

APPEL suggests setting an agreed list of learning opportunities at student induction to encourage and enable the student to direct themselves in their learning at busy times **Students with no previous experience in a pharmacy may find it difficult to be proactive in the unfamiliar environment of a pharmacy/department. They will benefit from help in identifying self- directed learning opportunities.**

The following are suggestions Please note that these activities are suggestions only and may or may not be suitable for a student in your workplace. **Students must be appropriately supervised at all times in the pharmacy**.

- Look at the types of medication stored in the pharmacy fridge. How does the pharmacist ensure the fridge is maintained at an appropriate temperature?
- Find out what is meant by the term 'unlicensed medicine'. Where are these medicines stored in the pharmacy, and how are they ordered?
- Look at the Pharmacy-only (P) medicines sold in the pharmacy. For each medicine, consider what information you would gather from a patient who wants to buy one of these medicines and what counselling you would provide in each case.
- Find out what pharmacy services are provided by the pharmacy.
- How does the pharmacy dispose of medicines returned by its patients?
- Does the pharmacy provide any services to local nursing homes or residential care units? Find out how the pharmacy helps with medication management (e.g., blister packs, venalinks, weekly dispensing).
- Find the PSI's pharmacist duty log. What is the purpose of the duty log, and what information is recorded therein?

Interprofessional activities:

Previously, students identified opportunities to observe interprofessional activities as a highlight of their placements. We understand that these opportunities may not occur frequently. However, we would welcome any opportunity provided to accompany the pharmacist to a meeting/service delivery that involves interacting with other healthcare professionals. Examples could include: visiting a nursing home; attending a hospital multidisciplinary meeting or lecture.

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.

GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation.

HEI – Higher Education Institution.

Learning Activities – The activities your student needs to complete and document while on their 2nd-year placement.

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

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.

Supervisor – A registered pharmacist who is supervising a 2nd-year student on placement.

Trinity – University of Dublin, Trinity College.

Training Establishment – The specific location providing the placement.

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

2nd-Year Placement – Experiential learning placement in the second year of the five-year integrated pharmacy programme.

Contact Details

APPEL Operations Team

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