### Question: What are placements like? How far will I travel? What if I don’t drive or have a car?

Each year you will have 2 placements of 8 weeks except your final placement in your third year will be at least 12 weeks long. While on placement you are allocated a mentor and a buddy who will be your first contacts if you have issues or questions and they will also be assessing you during your placement. Generally, you will be following whatever shifts your mentor and buddy do. The type and length of shift you do depends on the area you are placed in. If you are on a hospital ward, you can expect to be completing 12-hour day or night shifts. If you are in the community you can generally expect to work 9am-5pm Monday to Friday but this can vary. You will be asked your preferred “placement base” which will be within Hampshire or the Isle of Wight. The faculty will plan as many experiences as possible in that area, including the relevant town/cities in the surrounding area. Some travel should be expected. In both your “placement base” and adjoining localities. The majority of placement locations are accessible by public transport, so there are no issues if you don’t have a car. Prior to starting a placement, you will be asked if you have a car, access to accommodation, or if you have any other circumstances to be considered. If you are placed on the Isle of Wight it is best to stay in accommodation as it is easier than commuting. Portsmouth and Basingstoke also have the option of accommodation if you feel like commuting will be too much.

### Question: What books do I need to buy?

Surprisingly, you won’t need or use that many books, and the library will have copies of the ones you use for assignments. Your anatomy and physiology module in year one is taught based on the textbook by Marieb and Hoehn, and you will have online access to this so you don’t need to buy a textbook. Many students prefer to get their own book, this is personal preference. Make sure you buy the best book for your learning style. Marieb and Hoehn is very wordy with very few pictures, so if visual learning is your style you may prefer the Ross and Wilson textbook. There are limited anatomy and physiology textbooks in the library so bear this in mind. In terms of other books, wait until you start and you’ll get an idea for which textbooks you might want to borrow from the library or buy. You don’t have to buy any essential textbooks for the course. If you do buy any books, you might want to consider buying second-hand for less money, especially for anatomy and physiology as very little changes between the editions.


### Question: How many days will I spend in university every week and when will my timetable be released?

Timetables for semester one are usually released during Fresher’s Week, and timetables for semester two are released just before the Christmas break. These timetables will detail what days and times you will be in university, and by looking up on Blackboard you can find out what the lecture is on. Most modules are set out so that all the content is taught in the first month or so, then giving you a couple of weeks off to focus on the assignment attached to the module. This means the start of every module is very hectic, you could be in 9am-5pm, 4 days one week, but then next week will be 9am–12pm, 5 days a week. Time in university decreases as each module goes on, and you might only spend 1 day in lectures towards the end of
the module. Attendance is compulsory, as you must complete 2,300 hours of theory over 3 years for single-field, or 3,067 hours over 4 years for dual-field. Additionally, on Blackboard you can access the year course timetable which gives an overview on when each module and placement start, and when your holiday is.

| What are SUSSED and Blackboard? | **SUSSED** is the university’s student home page effectively. It is a noticeboard for everyone at the university, including the staff. You log in using your university computing email address and password so make sure you remember these or write them down somewhere safe. From there you can access a wealth of information and resources, such as university timetable, university email account (this is very important and remember to check it daily or link automatic notifications to your phone), library search engines, health sciences student portal, the list goes on! Have a look around on the website, there’s lots to find that will help you not only at the start, but throughout your degree.

**Blackboard** is the university teaching website. It is where all your lecture slides and seminar resources are uploaded. You can access the online anatomy and physiology textbook via Blackboard. You can only access the year course timetable from Blackboard. Additionally, information on placement areas are available on Blackboard. Like **SUSSED**, there is lots of useful information and resources there, so spend some time getting to grips with the website.

| How much holiday do I get as a student nurse? | You get seven fixed weeks of Annual Leave per year which normally includes Christmas, Easter and summertime. This is the best time to book holidays abroad with family and friends. There are also reading weeks or ‘free weeks’ when there are no lectures or seminars planned, however these should not be used to take holiday. Your Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) may arrange to meet with you or the time can be used to prepare for an upcoming exam or to rearrange any sessions you may have missed/lecturers may have been ill. On **Blackboard**, there is a Programme Calendar under Pre-registration Nursing programmes where you can see the timetable for your year. This is where you can find your Annual Leave.

| What is a DBS and why do I need to do it? | It must seem like you have so many forms to fill in and get organised before starting your nursing course. The **Welcome website** has a wealth of information and is simple to navigate, taking you through IT induction, ordering your ID card and letting you know where to go on your first day.

One of the most important forms is your DBS Application – DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service, formerly known as CRB) is a screening tool used to ensure that unsuitable people are not working with vulnerable groups.

In your “Welcome Email” from the Faculty of Health Sciences, you will receive details on how to order your DBS Application (a phone number to call), you will then be posted a hard copy DBS Application – complete this ASAP and send it to the Faculty as directed. Your ID documentation e.g. your passport, driving license and a bank statement dated within the last three months, should have been checked at your Selection Session. Please ensure that you do not delay completing and returning the DBS Application as this may affect your place on the course and your future placements. **If you do not have a DBS, you will not be going on placement – simple!**

Once you have received your completed, and hopefully clear, DBS Certificate in the post **KEEP IT SAFE** as you will need to
Bring this along on your induction days for checking. When you do receive your DBS Certificate, you will also need to sign up to the ‘Update Service’. There is a cost associated with this (around £14 a year) which you will not be reimbursed for unfortunately – but it is within your interests to do it, so please do!

The hard copy of your DBS Certificate will need to be kept safe as you may be required to present this at some point during your course, and the update service kept up-to-date annually.

| Is it possible that I may be given a placement on the Isle of Wight? | Yes, this is a possibility for Nursing students, however the University try their best to give placements to people based on their situation and location for their convenience. The University also offers advice on how to set up accommodation on the island for the time that you’re staying there and they send out a whole bunch of students together, so you won’t be alone. |
| If I get an Isle of Wight placement, is the travel between the island and Southampton easy? | The travel is simple and straightforward, there are regular buses to the ferry port in Southampton, and similarly there are regular buses from the ferry port in Cowes (Isle of Wight). You can travel as a ‘foot passenger’ or you can take your car on the ferry, and you can buy your ticket on the day, this isn’t an issue. (Foot passenger travel costs on the ferry can be reimbursed, vehicle travel costs on the ferry cannot.)

**Red Funnel – Ferry to Isle of Wight** – Vehicle, bicycle or foot passengers, Southampton to East Cowes in 55-60 minutes

**Red Jet Hi-Speed Ferry Service** – Foot passengers only, Southampton to West Cowes in 25 minutes

**unilink – university bus links anyone can use** – U1C to Southampton Central Railway Station and transfer to Quay Connect Bus or U1C to Holyrood Church and walk 5-8 minutes to ferry port

**Quay Connect Bus** – Southampton Central Train Station to Red Funnel Ferry Terminal (Free for Red Funnel customers)

**Southern Vectis Bus Services** – Buses on the Isle of Wight |
Useful Hints and Tips:

- Download a [Campus Map](#) on to your phone (or print one if you’re old school) and walk around the campus to familiarise yourself with the locations of the buildings. They are not laid out in numerical order FYI – that would make life way too easy!

- Download these apps to your phone:
  - [My Southampton](#)
  - [Mobile Learn (Blackboard)](#)
  - [Outlook](#) (for your University emails, and make sure you set up your push notifications.)
  - [One Drive](#)
  - [NICE BNF](#)

- Add your University email address to your Facebook account

- Get to grips with the [Library](#), attend the induction sessions, utilise the online “how-to guides” and video tours. Getting to know how to use the Library at the start of the course will really set you up for the rest of your time here. The librarians are very happy to help!
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<tr>
<th>Case Study #1</th>
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<td><strong>Kara Jackman</strong></td>
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Hi! My name is Kara and I’m a second year, dual field adult and children’s nursing student.

Nursing is a tough course in general with packed timetables, tough assignments and long working hours on placement, but is also so incredibly rewarding. Seeing patients getting better under your care and being able to help put a smile on a face of a person who is unwell is such a privilege! I really love being a dual field student at Southampton. Despite the extra year of training, having placements in both the adult and child fields means that I am able to work with people across the whole age spectrum, from tiny neonatal babies up to people in their 90s and even beyond!

I’ll qualify as both an adult nurse and a children’s nurse so I’ll have a lot of choice over where I want to work in the future too. Southampton is an amazing place to train with such a major hospital right on our doorstep (meaning great placements!) and there’s so much to do and get involved in at University.

Hopefully see you in September!
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<tr>
<th>Case Study #2</th>
<th>Ava Dwyer</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Year, Adult Nursing Student, Student from Ireland</td>
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<td></td>
<td>My initial thought upon opening my letter of acceptance from University of Southampton: ‘Wow I actually got accepted, but I’ll never take the offer.’ The reasoning behind this pessimistic view was purely because I could never see myself leaving my friends and family at home. Coming to the end of my second year, it is only through the support and push I received from these people to follow my dream to become a nurse that I am here, something I will be forever grateful for.</td>
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<td>If I could give any EU student one piece of advice it would be to get out there. On moving day (pictured here) my dad helped me unpack all my belongings in halls, and finally it was time to say goodbye. That night I was invited to go out with the people in the flat below me, people I’d never met in my life! To say that the prospect of knocking on the door of a room full of students I didn’t know was daunting, would be an understatement. However here I am, a year and a half later, living with those strangers who I now call best friends. Don’t get me wrong, there were days when I was homesick, however it’s so important to keep yourself busy and keep going. If I didn’t build such a strong support network here in Southampton, I doubt I’d still be on my way to becoming a nurse.</td>
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<td>Take full advantage of the support available from the University, there are amazing tutors and counsellors that are always more than happy to help you out, not to mention the copious amounts of clubs and societies.</td>
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<td>I was upset moving to Southampton, but I’ll be a million times more upset leaving it.</td>
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<td>Be strong, have courage and enjoy – trust the magic of new beginnings.</td>
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Case Study #3

Lee Thomas  
Second Year, Adult Nursing Student, Mature Student

Facing the prospect of being a mature student was daunting at first and it certainly has been a challenge adjusting to university life and all the pressures it brings.

When I started the course, I turned the space under the stairs into a study with a desk and books, pens, pencils and other essential stationery only to have it scribbled upon and rearranged by my 18-month-old daughter. I've found the life/placement/lecture balance to be a delicate juggling act but overall, I believe I am doing better as a mature student than I would have as a younger person. I have a better perspective on this new career path than I would have had as a 20-something.

Being a mature student is achievable but it takes an organised mind and home life.