Process Document

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| **Title:** | External Examiner Annual Visits to Practice Placements |
| **Date:** September 2014 | |

**Introduction**

The Faculty of Health Sciences offers a variety of pre-registration programmes which comprise teaching and learning in the University and out in Practice Placements. External Examiners are provided with the opportunity to visit practice placements relevant to the programme that they are examining. This is organised by the Curriculum and Quality Assurance Team in conjunction with the Faculty Leads for Practice Learning. These visits will take place on the morning of the Examination Board or the day before where appropriate.

**Examination Boards**

There are 3 sets of Examination Boards:

Nursing and Midwifery

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| **Programme** |
| **Bachelor Nursing (Hons) Adult** |
| **Bachelor Nursing (Hons) Child** |
| **Bachelor Nursing (Hons) Mental Health** |
| **Bachelor Nursing (Hons) Child/Adult** |
| **Bachelor Nursing (Hons) Adult/Mental Health** |
| **Bachelor Midwifery (Hons)** |
| **Postgraduate Diploma Adult Nursing** |
| **Postgraduate Diploma Child Nursing** |
| **Postgraduate Diploma Mental Health Nursing** |

Allied Health Professions and Healthcare Science

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| **Programme** |
| **Bachelor Science (Hons) Physiotherapy** |
| **Master Science Physiotherapy** |
| **Bachelor Science (Hons) Occupational Therapy** |
| **Bachelor Science (Hons) Podiatry** |
| **Bachelor Science (Hons) Healthcare Science** |

Specialist Practice

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| **Programme** |
| **Bachelor Science (Hons) Public Health Practice: Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (SCPHN)** |
| **Postgraduate Diploma Public Health Practice: Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (SCPHN)** |
| **Master Science Advanced Clinical Practice (District Nursing/Children’s Community Nursing)** |

These boards take place at the following intervals throughout the academic year:

Nursing and Midwifery

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| **Board Date** |
| **November** |
| **March** |
| **July** |
| **September** |

Allied Health Professions and Healthcare Science

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| **Board Date** |
| **February** |
| **June** |
| **September** |

Specialist Practice

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| **Board Date** |
| **September** |

**External Examiners**

Each programme has an External Examiner who is an Academic from another University with the knowledge and skills to provide assurance to the University that:

* The academic standard of each award is set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that standards of student performance are properly judged against this standard.
* Assessment processes measure student achievement appropriately, are rigorous, fairly operated and in accordance with University policies and regulations.
* The standards of its awards are comparable with other similar institutions.
* Learning from and sharing of examples of good practice happens.

External Examiners are required to report on:

* Whether the academic standards set are appropriate.
* The extent to which the assessment is appropriate, rigorous, equitable and fairly conducted.
* Whether the marking scheme and assessment criteria are at the right level and have been applied appropriately.
* The standards of student performance.
* The comparability of standards and achievement to other institutions.
* The consistency of standards and achievement where programmes are delivered by external partners.
* Innovation and good practice.

**Visits to Practice Placements**

In order for External Examiners to fulfil their role and submit their report, they require the opportunity to examine all aspects of a programme of study including the aspects of the programme that are delivered by external partners. Therefore, the Faculty of Health Sciences offers External Examiners the opportunity to visit practice placements once a year. External Examiners are accompanied by a member of academic staff with a role in supporting learning in practice. The External Examiners will expect to see students and mentors/supervisors in a practice placement as part of their examination of the practice elements of the programme.

At these visits, External Examiners will normally consider:

* The environment where the student is placed.
* The preparation that mentors/supervisors have to teach and assess students.
* Whether the assessment is appropriate, rigorous, equitable and fairly conducted.
* The standards of student performance.
* The comparability of standards and student achievement to other institutions.
* Innovation and good practice.

They will gather this information by interviewing the student and mentor/supervisor (and/or other staff involved in student learning) and observing the learning environment.

**Organisation of External Examiner Visits to Practice Placements**

Curriculum and Quality Team identify Examination Boards when students are in Practice Placements

**At the start of the academic year**, the Curriculum and Quality Team invite External Examiners to make a practice placement visit and to identify an area of interest for the visit

Curriculum and Quality Team notify Leads for Practice Learning which External Examiners want to visit at which Examination Board and what area they would ideally like to visit

Leads for Practice Learning liaise with Learning Environment Lead (or equivalent) to arrange visit, **usually 4 weeks** prior to the visit

Leads for Practice Learning will identify and liaise with member of academic staff who will accompany the External Examiner on the visit

Leads for Practice Learning will inform the Curriculum and Quality Team which External Examiner is going where and when and with whom

The academic accompanying the External Examiner will communicate with the External Examiner through the Curriculum and Quality Team to ensure travel arrangements are in place for the visit

The Learning Environment Lead (or equivalent) will inform the practice placement of the arrangements and which academic is facilitating the visit

Following the visit the academic accompanying the External Examiner will provide a short report to the Practice Leads for Practice Learning (Appendix A)

These reports will be summarised and presented at the Practice Learning Committee at the beginning of the academic year with any issues requiring action addressed on receipt of the report

**Summary**

External Examiner visits to practice are an important part of assuring the quality of the programmes in the Faculty of Health Sciences. There is recognition that these visits require organisation to ensure that the most appropriate people are available to facilitate the visit and provide the External Examiners with the information that they require. A process to feedback findings by the External Examiners has been formalised.

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| Status: | Approved |
| Originated by: | Paula Libberton |
| Date of Approval: | 21 October 2014 |
| Effective from (date): | October 2014 |
| Date for review: | October 2016 |

**Appendix A**

Report by academic accompanying External Examiner on visit to practice placement.

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| **Academic Year:** |  |
| **Date of Visit:** |  |
| **Academic:** |  |
| **External Examiner:** |  |
| **Programme:** |  |
| **Practice Organisation:** |  |
| **Organisation of Visit:**  A: Successes  B: Challenges |  |
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| **Visit 1:** |  |
| Placement Name: |  |
| Student Name: |  |
| Mentor/Supervisor Name: |  |
| Other members of staff present: |  |
| Successes: |  |
| Challenges: |  |
| Actions Required: |  |
| **Visit 2:** |  |
| Placement Name: |  |
| Student Name: |  |
| Mentor/Supervisor Name: |  |
| Other members of staff present: |  |
| Successes: |  |
| Challenges: |  |
| Actions Required: |  |