

NCFE

CACHE

Guidance on Preparing for Placement in Health and Social Care Settings

Module 1

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Hello!

Welcome to the programme **Preparing for Placement**. In these strange times it may be difficult for you to access a placement and we hope that this programme will help you to prepare for when you are able to.

We know you must be feeling nervous about the whole thing and that the idea of placement might be a bit daunting at the moment. However don't worry, you will soon settle in and enjoy your experience. You will be able to make links and apply what you are learning in the classroom to the context of a real work environment. You too will see professional practice in action.

The programme is broken down into several modules and we will work through a range of different topics to include:

- the qualities of a practitioner
- how to get the most out of your placement
- health and social care settings
- professional practice
- legislation, policy and procedure
- impact of Covid-19
- becoming a reflective practitioner
- exploring career options
- planning for development
- continuing professional development (CPD).

Before we begin I would like to introduce you to **Hanna** and **Jackson**. Hanna and Jackson have both been in your position. Therefore they know the challenges you will face and how nervous you must be feeling; they were too and that was before Covid-19! They will pop up throughout the programme to help guide you and share their own experiences of placement.

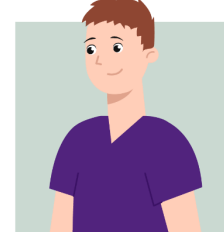


As we have said, going into a placement is a great opportunity for you. You will spend time in a real work environment and be able to put into practice all that you are learning.

There is quite a lot though you can do for yourself before you start. A little preparation will help to make you feel more confident and get the most out of the experience.

Topic 1: How do I feel about starting placement?

“So there I was, I was both excited that I had landed that all important work placement, but at the same time I was apprehensive because I didn’t know what to expect. Yes; I had learnt a lot during my course, but work placement at a health and social care setting was going to be a whole new ball game.”



“Hi my name is Drina, I am a manager at a residential care home. The most important thing for us, is that people who come in for work experience know something about our organisation and what we are passionate about. It’s a good idea to have a look through our website, read through our brochure and some of our published policies. It will make you feel much better if you can get a feeling for what we do and the needs of the individuals we support.”

What steps might you take to find out about the organisation you will be spending your placement with?

- ✓ Visit their website
- ✓ Get a copy of their brochure
- ✗ Ask a lot of questions about the organisation on your first day
- ✓ Arrange a pre-visit to meet some of the staff as soon as you are able to attend.

The setting’s brochure will provide information about the mission, values and aims of the organisation.

See if you can find a local setting's brochure to read through. Write a short piece about what you have found out about the service.

So now you have carried out some research let us take a look at what those first few days may be like when you do start your placement.

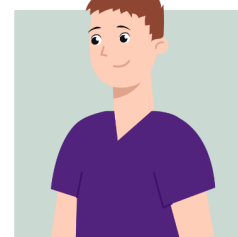


“You probably won’t know anyone and you won’t have people coming up to you asking you your life story. But it doesn’t mean you’re not wanted. A lot of the time people are busy, so don’t mistake this for rudeness. Don’t get upset if they forget your name.”

“It really helps if you learn the names of the people you work with. Addressing your new colleagues by name is the first step towards creating good working relationships.”



“The first few days in any setting can be challenging. I remember that I felt and a bit like a spare part. Everything was new, I didn’t know where anything was kept and I wasn’t sure what I should be doing from one to the next. However, everyone was very approachable, especially my placement mentor who gave me some great advice. Remember you are so it’s important to take some time to settle in and get to know the team, roles and how you fit in. Take time to assess the culture and personalities the team. That’s not to say you can’t be yourself, but just get an idea of things work first.”



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“Please don’t think that you should know everything straight away, it is okay to ask questions. You will soon get to know everyone, their different roles and the responsibilities they hold.”

What should you do if any of your new work colleagues do not speak to you?

- ✓ Wait until they are less busy then find a reason to speak with them
- ✓ Use the person's name when you address them to break down barriers and establish a more personal relationship
- ✓ If they are busy and you are not, offer to help
- ✗ Ignore them they are just rude.

When someone does not speak it does not mean that they are rude; they may be busy, shy or unsure of how to approach you. When you are new it sometimes falls upon you to make the first approach and speak to the other person.

Try to adopt a friendly, proactive, can-do attitude. Make sure you give every task equal enthusiasm; you'll soon impress everyone!

Excited



“Your placement is going to be a fantastic time. You will have the opportunity to immerse yourself in the daily routines of a health and social care workplace, gain experience as well as put into practice the skills and knowledge you have developed from your learning. However not every day will be great, you will have to adapt to your new environment, meet new people and learn new skills. So it's inevitable that there will be moments when you may need to demonstrate some personal resilience, don't let the moment get you down.”

Feeling isolated, doubting your own abilities? Don't let things bug you... try this 'Worry buster technique'. Think about:

- why the task, person or request is worrying or annoying you?
- your reaction, focus on the possible positive outcomes
- what you have to lose or gain and learn from the experience?
- the importance of trusting your own intuition and judgement.

Topic 2: Qualities of a Health and Social Care Practitioner

Watch these short videos. The first looks at working in the health sector and the second in the care sector.

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/we-are-nhs


www.youtube.be/zaRF-4lX000

Having watched the videos what do you think the qualities of a health and social care practitioner are? Read the following section and use the text boxes to answer the questions set for you.

It may sound simple but really above all else you need to like people and enjoy being with them.

Throughout your course you will gain relevant knowledge and skills so as to become a 'quality' practitioner. Let's consider some key attributes.

- Are you a good listener? Active listening is a vital part of caring for anyone. Sometimes an individual's needs are communicated more by what is left unsaid than what is actually said. You should be aware of the different forms of non-verbal communication when you are interacting and listening to individuals. Look out for clues of how an individual may be feeling; this could be communicated for example in the way they stand, sit or their facial expression.
- Describe verbal and non-verbal communication?



- You need to be able to be aware of and respond to the feelings and needs of others. Being sensitive to an individual's needs means you acknowledge and understand their feelings. Consider how someone may feel when admitted to hospital or the emotions someone may experience following a significant event or transition.
- You will need to be patient and tolerant. Taking time to support an individual and promote independence in a person-centred way even when you need to hurry is an example of being patient.

- You too need to be aware of and respect individual's personal rights, dignity and privacy. Remember every individual is unique. **Can you give any examples when you have shown respect for another person?**

Examples:

- Interpersonal skills: these include the ability to show warmth and friendliness to help create a positive atmosphere, overcome any barriers and facilitate effective interactions. Interpersonal skills therefore include the ability to communicate effectively. **Can you give some other examples of interpersonal skills?**

Examples:

- Can you judge what effect your behaviour may have on other people? This is self-awareness. Are you willing to adapt? When you are working as part of a team, you need to be aware of how others see you and to be prepared to change your behaviour to help the team function well.
- Can you cope with stress? Are you resilient? You need a great deal of energy when you are working in a health and social care setting.

You have explored some attributes required of the health and social care practitioner. Before we move on, watch this short clip which introduces the 6Cs; the underpinning values of practice: www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/compassion-in-practice/

Now take a look at the following short video which highlights the difference both high quality settings and practitioners can make for individuals:

www.scie.org.uk/socialcare/v/video-player.asp?v=whatisexcellence

In the text box make a record of your understanding of what constitutes quality practice.

Resource

Spin the wheel

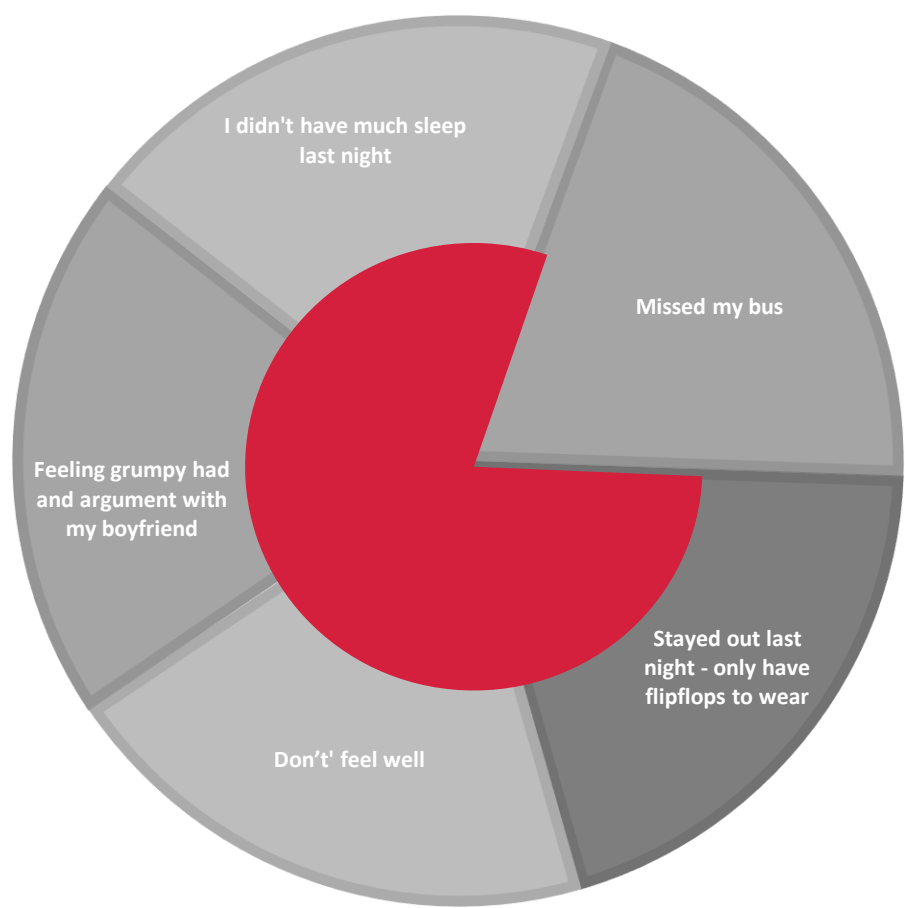
Use the template below to create a resource to consolidate your learning so far and consider further the qualities of a health and social care practitioner.

A range of potential scenarios and challenges are presented. On your own or in a group take turns to spin the wheel. For each challenge indicated consider an appropriate response. This will help you to prepare for every eventuality.

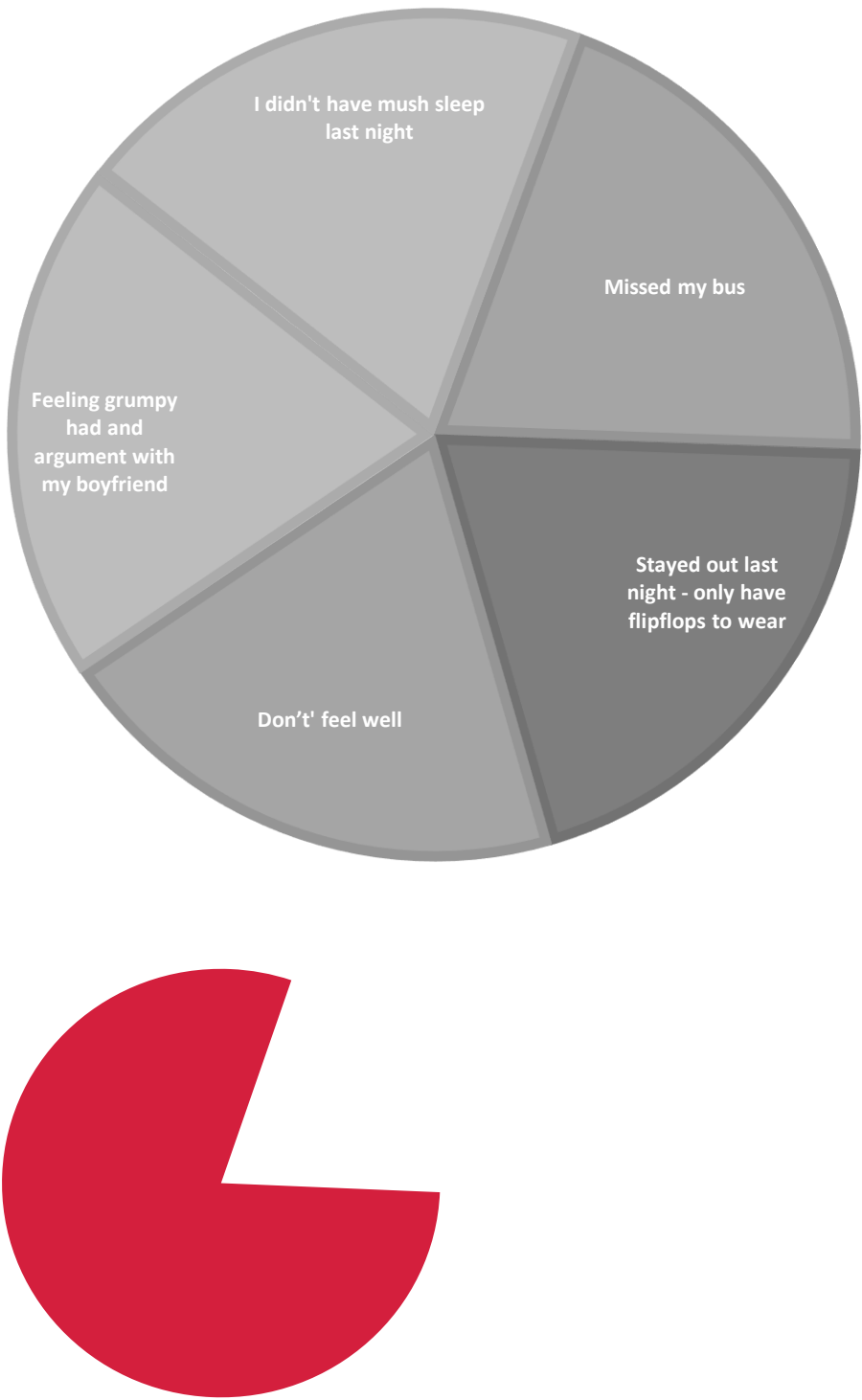
The 'Qualities of a Practitioner' wheel.

1. To produce the wheel an inner and outer circle template is required.
2. The outer circle is divided into 6 equal segments, each being representative of an issue or problem that maybe faced.
3. The inner circle has a segment cut out which is the same size as the individual segments in the outer circle.
4. Secure the inner circle to the outer circle. Movement must be enabled.

Example of the finished wheel:



Template pieces ready for cutting:



Now you have completed the task, think about some other scenarios which may occur and create your own headings for the wheel. Repeat the exercise again using your own examples.

“You are off to a great start; you have completed 2 topics so far. You have been given some practical tips on how you can prepare for your placement to help you settle in quickly. You too have explored techniques support you to develop your own personal resilience.

Now is the time to begin building a plan for yourself, perhaps a small table hints and tips to help you when you do get into your placement. Once your setting is confirmed you could note contact details, the appropriate dress code as well as consider travel arrangements for example bus routes and timetables. Whatever you include make sure it's useful to you.”



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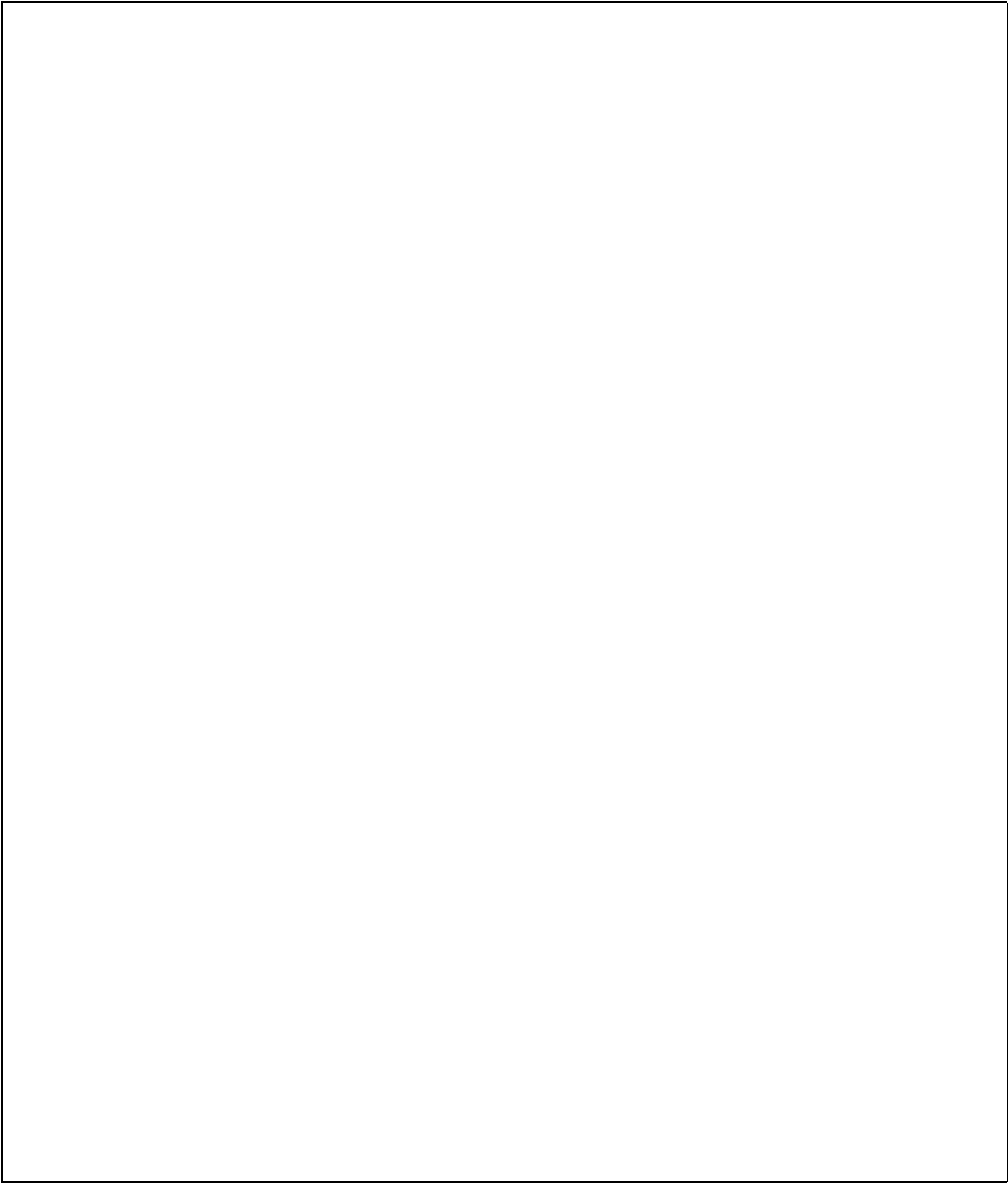
Activity – Research CACHE Alumni

CACHE Alumni is a free to join membership group for all practitioners whether you are just starting out as a learner or are a fully qualified practitioner. You will find so much information on CACHE Alumni; lots of interesting articles and it's a really useful tool too. There is a CV builder, a job finder and so much more - and of course; it's free!

If you would like to join CACHE Alumni and therefore be able to complete some online learning later in this programme, you can of course join by clicking this link www.cachealumni.org.uk

Watch this short video which will help you understand the importance of a membership organisation: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pz6q8kJnIrQ

What did you find out? Use the space below to explain why joining a membership organisation could be beneficial for you.



Now let us consider your placement in a bit more detail, and how you can get as much as possible out of your time in practice.

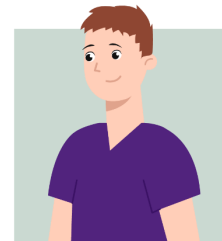
In order to help you to have a good experience it is important that you understand the aims and objectives of your placement. It is equally important that a common understanding of your role and what support you may require is established with the employer.

Topic 3: How to get the most from your placement



- Your placement will provide the opportunity to experience work-based learning and develop practical skills.
- The experience gained will develop your underpinning knowledge and understanding of the care and support needs of individuals accessing the setting.
- The placement will give you the opportunity to work collaboratively with individuals, their families, carers, colleagues and other professionals.

- Your time on placement will give you confidence to be able to take on new responsibilities.
- You will have the opportunity to apply the knowledge you have acquired during your course to solve problems in a variety of contexts.
- Working with your mentor you will be able to reflect on what you have learnt and review its impact on your work practices.



Okay – so you understand why you are going on placement, but what will be expected of you?



“As an employer I expect you to contribute to the smooth running of the setting from day one. As your placement progresses I expect that I will be able to trust you to take on more responsibility, use your own initiative and act in accordance with our policies and procedures.”

I will expect you to:

- treat the needs and welfare of individuals as your first priority
- be able to communicate appropriately
- be polite, courteous, willing and co-operative at all times
- be honest, trustworthy and maintain confidentiality
- follow dress code requirements
- attend on the days and times agreed
- be punctual
- should absence be unavoidable let me know before the start of the working day
- be organised and know what you have to achieve during your placement
- be respectful of your colleagues, individuals, their families and carers.

“Although you will be on placement you are still ‘on course’, therefore your provider will also have requirements and expectations of you. These include:

- good attendance
- carrying out the duties assigned to the best of your ability
- generating evidence in relation to meeting the assessment criteria
- learning and demonstrating reflective qualities
- building confidence
- applying learning to practical situations
- meeting regularly with your onsite mentor to review progress and plan for development.”



Which 3 of the following do you think are expectations your employer will have of you whilst you are on placement?

- ✓ That you are able to work and interact with individuals to ensure their wellbeing
- ✓ That you turn up on time for all shifts allocated to you
- ✓ That you take responsibility and accountability for achieving your aims whilst on placement
- ✗ That you will require ‘hand holding’ and one to one support.

It is important that you assume responsibility for yourself when in a workplace environment. For example, you must know where you have to be and when, you must dress appropriately, you must contribute to the running of the setting and you must be sure to complete tasks and assignments as directed.

Which of the following do you think are expectations your training provider will have of you whilst you are on placement?

- ✓ That you respect the opportunity the employer has given you and turn up for sessions as scheduled
- ✓ That you learn from the experience, keep a record of your activities and reflect on what you learn
- ✓ That you take the opportunity to gain practical experience and put theory into practice
- ✗ That you only do the tasks that further the aims of your placement and meet criteria in your study programme

You will soon become familiar with routines and before long you will be contributing to these with confidence.



“So now you know what is expected of you... but what can you expect of the employer and training provider whilst you are on placement? You should use this guide as a basis for discussion with your manager and mentor. Let’s find out more.”

“When we take you on placement we will provide opportunities for practical experience and give you access to a mentor to guide and support you. We will give you a warm welcome and help you to quickly settle in as part of the team. You will be given an induction; this will introduce you to our policies, procedures and general guidelines.



- We will allocate one of our experienced members of staff to be your mentor
- We will monitor progress, help you formulate your plans and give you feedback
- When and if appropriate we will conduct observations and assessments
- In addition to the help you receive from your mentor you can expect guidance, advice and support from your manager and work colleagues
- We will offer you appropriate opportunities and experiences to enhance your training
- We have a duty of care to you to provide a safe and secure environment to work in
- As part of our duty of care we will communicate any cause for concern to your training provider.”

You are still a student of the training provider even though you are on placement, therefore you will maintain regular contact with them. However, you should contact your training provider if you have any personal concerns or are worried about how your placement is going. This will enable solutions to be sought.

You can expect your training provider to:

- be available to provide guidance, advice and support to both you and your mentor
- when necessary, send an assessor/tutor to complete observations to allow achievement of assessment criteria
- visit the location to discuss progress and check the suitability of the environment
- respond to any concerns raised by the staff in the setting and provide you with feedback if appropriate
- manage all necessary paperwork
- maintain a safeguarding role in respect to your safety and wellbeing.

So remember, although the employer has a shared responsibility for your development and wellbeing, whilst on placement you remain a student and will have access to the full support of your training provider.

To recap, consider the list of responsibilities below and match each to the delegated person, employer or student – check your answers on the next page.

- Punctuality; know where to go, how to get there and where to be throughout the day
- Be professional, non-judgemental and maintain confidentiality
- Have excellent personal hygiene and dress appropriately
- Reflect on learning achieved and your personal experiences

- Attend sessions with your mentor
- Be familiar with and understand the employer's policies and procedures
- Set targets, challenges and delegate responsibilities
- Take interest in workload, progress and give feedback
- Allow involvement in daily routines
- Co-operate with the visiting assessor or tutor.

- (S) Student
- (E) Employer
- (S) Punctuality; know where to go, how to get there and where to be throughout the day.
- (S) Be professional, non-judgemental and maintain confidentiality.
- (S) Have excellent personal hygiene and dress appropriately.
- (S) Reflect on learning achieved and your personal experiences.
- (S) Attend sessions with your mentor.
- (S) Co-operate with visiting Assessor or Tutor.
- (S) Be familiar with and understand the employer's policies and procedures.
- (E) Set targets, challenges and delegate responsibilities
- (E) Take interest in workload, progress and give feedback
- (E) Allow involvement in daily routine
- (E) Co-operate with the visiting Assessor or Tutor.

Apprehensive



“So now you know what is expected of you. How do you measure up?
How confident are you feeling?”



Don't worry, when you do start placement, you won't be dropped in at the deep end! You will likely spend the first week getting to know the individuals and work shadowing staff. Then you will gradually take on more responsibility for care and support routines.”

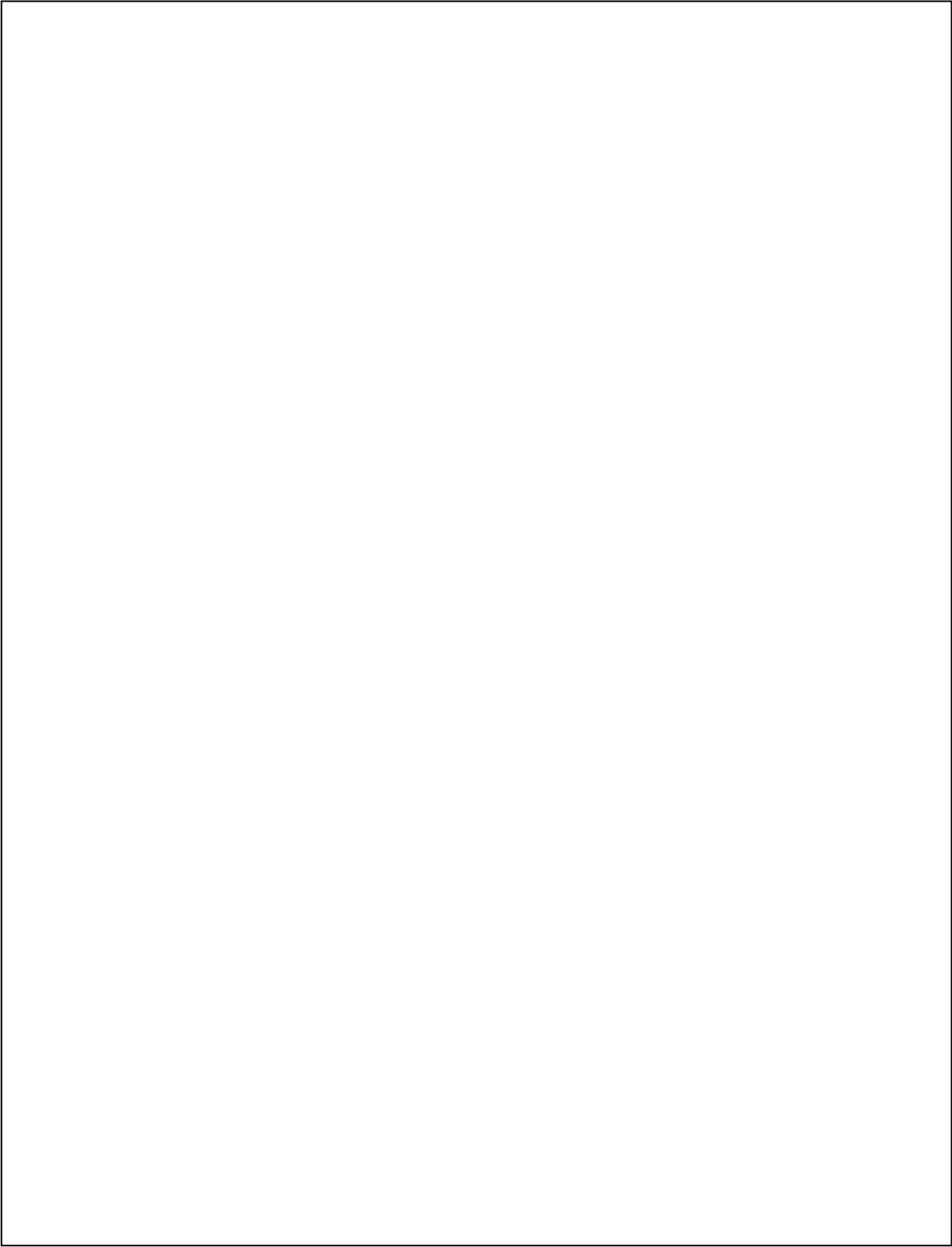
Topic 4: Exploring different types of Health and Social Care Settings

Now you should have an understanding of what will be expected of you, your training provider and the employer in your placement. These expectations will not change whatever type of provision you are in.

So let us explore the different types of health and social care settings. Below are listed a range of settings.

- Residential care home
- Day centre
- Children's centre
- Health centre
- Supported/sheltered accommodation
- Domiciliary/community care
- Respite care
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) school
- Assessment centre
- Hospital
- Specialised voluntary group.

Pick 3 of the settings from the list above to research. Write a short piece to give an overview of the service provided by each. Also clearly identify any differences between the settings you have selected. You may wish to complete this as group activity, if so, divide the list of settings between your group members, carry out research independently then bring findings back for discussion. Summarise outcomes on the next page.



Topic 5: Professional Practice



Punctual attendance is a matter of personal discipline and planning. It demonstrates qualities such as trust and reliability.

“One thing I soon found out was that being in the right place at the right time was very important. Sounds simple I know, but I had to get used to having different start times and make sure that I knew the bus timetable so I was there in plenty of time.

Planning is an essential part of ensuring that you are on time and keep to time throughout your day. Choose a setting in your local area which could be a potential placement and see if you can complete the table below, use your imagination. It helped me when I was preparing for my placement. Be sure to include any walking time and also a little bit of contingency for early running buses. Make sure you have a record of the setting’s telephone number. If illness or emergency prevents you from attending your placement you must remember to telephone and explain before the working day begins. Don’t forget to also let your Tutor know.”



What time do I need to.....

	Get up
	Leave home
	Get my bus/transport to my setting
08:30	Start my shift
08:45	The start and end times, location of sessions you are supporting
	Break time
	Meet with my mentor
	Lunchtime
	Team meeting
17.30	End of shift
	Bus home
	Local events that might impact travel the following day eg road works, public events etc.
20:00	Preparation of the next day.



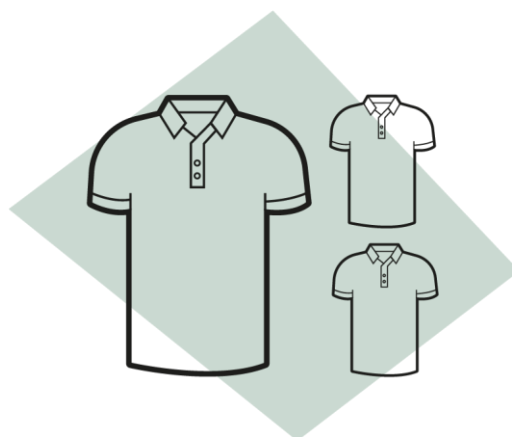
“I found out that it is the little things that catch you out. It seems silly now but I went without a drink the first day as I was too shy to ask about making a cup of tea... Which cup could I use? Could I use the milk? I know it was daft really, but I didn't like to ask. Oh... and by the way, make sure you find out about the arrangements for meal breaks, where you will eat, how long you have, if you are to bring food, if there is a shop nearby.”

What to wear or what not to wear



We all like to dress up and wear our favourite clothes and jewellery, but in a health and social care setting this is not appropriate. You will need to find out if the setting requires you to wear a uniform. If not, what is the required dress code?

If there is no uniform you will need to be smart. Your clothes should be clean and sensible. However, many settings will require you to wear a polo shirt or sweatshirt. This is a good idea as individuals, families and carers will be able to recognise you as a student.



Fun days

“From time to time your setting might have theme days, they’re great fun. I love them! But these too require planning; for example being in the right place at the right time and in the right clothes!”

“If there is no uniform, your clothes should be clean and sensible. Wear appropriate shoes at all times, no heels or sandals and definitely no sling backs or open toed shoes, as these are dangerous in the setting. Do not wear excessive make up or a strong scent, as you may be working in close proximity to individuals and others.

It is not good practice to have long nails. This is for hygiene reasons as well for safety. Some health and social care settings will have procedures in place around nails but as a general rule long nails and working with individuals do not mix well! Remember also that you will be undertaking routine procedures that involve cleaning duties and preparation of resources.



as

If you have long hair tie this back, this not only looks smart but will also contribute to hygiene practice. Do not wear jewellery as it can become entangled, broken or lost or even cause an individual to be scratched.”

“It’s the same for me too, I wear sensible shoes at all times, so no flip-flops as these are dangerous in the setting. Some settings may not approve of jeans; it is always best to check out the dress code policy.

Some settings may disapprove of tattoos and/or piercings and will ask you to cover or remove these.

If you are asked to wear a visitor or name badge or a lanyard make sure you do, this is an important security procedure being a means of identification.”

Why are punctuality and attendance important?

- ✓ Punctual attendance demonstrates qualities such as trust and reliability
- ✓ Punctual attendance shows respect to your colleagues and individuals
- ✗ To ensure your tutor gets a good report about you.

Arriving early and being prepared reduces your personal levels of stress and will allow you to tackle tasks in a positive frame of mind.

What should you consider when dressing for work?

- ✓ Wear sensible shoes
- ✓ Do not wear excessive make up, a strong scent or aftershave
- ✓ Do not wear jewellery that dangles (earrings, necklaces etc)
- ✓ Only wear jeans if the setting dress code allows them
- ✓ If necessary cover tattoos and/or piercings or remove piercings
- ✗ Do not wear items of clothing that are brightly coloured.

Don't forget the setting may require you to wear a uniform, company polo shirt or sweatshirt and name badge or lanyard. If there is no uniform you will need to be smart and dressed practicably.



“I hope you have enjoyed the first module in our preparing for placement programme. Come back soon for module 2 where we will explore legislation, policy and procedure.”