Hub and Spoke Policy for Undergraduate Nursing and Midwifery Programmes
1. Introduction

1.1 The three Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are committed to providing practice placements which maximise learning opportunities, enhance student learning and ensure that the Nursing and Midwifery Council (2010) statutory and professional competencies for entry into field specific programmes and competencies / standards of proficiency for entry into the appropriate parts of the professional register can be met.

1.2 By providing a practice placement circuit that guarantees that the aforementioned aspects are met, the HEIs are ensuring that Pre–Registration diploma and degree undergraduate nursing and midwifery students who complete the 3 year programme are fit for purpose, practice and award, so that they are able to gain entry to the appropriate register.

1.3 To meet the NMC requirements, students need to gain exposure and practice centred care in a variety of learning environments, 24 hour care and alternative branches of nursing and midwifery. In doing this students will be prepared to practise safely, effectively and achieve professional competence. The development of the nursing and midwifery curricular recognises that students must be actively involved in nursing / midwifery care under supervision. Equally, registered nurses / midwives working within clinical practice have a “duty to facilitate students and others to develop their competence” (NMC 2008.). The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) states that an “effective placement learning opportunity is one in which the aims and intended learning competencies are clearly defined and understood by all parties and where the responsibilities of the higher education institution, placement provider and student are made explicit”.

1.4 There remains pressure on the North West placement circuit and the ongoing reconfiguration of services continues to add to this.

1.5 The development of a practice placement circuit that utilises a “Hub and Spoke” method of allocating students in clinical areas is one way of expanding the capacity of the existing practice placement circuit and ensuring that the NMC and QAA aspects of placement learning are met.

1.6 This policy is relevant to all academic staff (as well as University Link Lecturers - ULL’s), clinical staff, Placement Administrators, Placement Development Managers (PDM’s), Practice Education Facilitators (PEF’s), Placement Education Leads (PELs) / Student Links, Pre – Registration diploma and degree undergraduate nursing and midwifery students from the University of Salford, Manchester Metropolitan University and The University of Manchester.

2. Aims of using a Hub and Spoke Placement Model

- Promote a quality learning environment in all practice placements.
- Maximise learning opportunities to broaden the student experience and meet the European Union Directives.
- Increase the capacity of hub placement areas.
- Maximise student exposure to inter-professional practice.
• Distribute the student population in a more systematic manner across the North West placement circuit.

**3.0 Key Elements**

**3.1. Hub Placement**

• Primary placement.

• Adult, mental health, child, learning disability or midwifery focussed practice placement.

• Hospital, community or non NHS provider.

• Placement is able to provide the learning opportunities to ensure that the appropriate module competencies are achieved and therefore facilitate the progression towards meeting the NMC's competencies (NMC 2010).

• Placement is able to provide a link between theory and practice.

• Placement is able to provide the opportunity to experience continuity of care from admission to discharge and learn, develop and apply the fundamentals of nursing / midwifery whilst under supervision.

• Minimum of 4 weeks allocation.

• Successfully audited by HEI.

• Each student must be allocated an appropriately qualified mentor and, where necessary, be supported by a system of team mentorship.

• Communication systems exist between the mentor in the hub and the qualified supervisor in the spoke.

• Practice Placement Assessment Documentation completed, at the appropriate times, within this area.

• For practitioners working individually a team approach to auditing can be undertaken within the locality. For example, an audit of all School Nurses.

**3.2. Spoke Placement**

• Secondary learning experience related to the hub placement.

• Provides learning opportunities linked to the patient’s journey through health care so that a fuller comprehensive view of care can be experienced by the student.

• Spoke experiences add to the student's learning and creates learning opportunities that are not available within the hub placement so facilitating the achievement of the appropriate module competencies.
- Spoke experiences may be able to offer learning opportunities to meet the European Union Directives in relation to exposure to other fields of nursing / midwifery.
- Adult, mental health, child, learning disability or midwifery focussed practice placement.
- Hospital, community or non NHS provider.
- Placement is able to enhance learning to aid meeting the appropriate NMC (2010) competencies.
- Placement is able to provide a link between theory and practice.
- Length of spoke can vary but should not amount to greater than a quarter of the time allocated to the hub placement. (Where there is concern regarding a student’s ability to achieve their competencies, the use of spokes should be discussed with the PEF to ensure the summative assessment takes priority). No spoke placement in final module of Year 3 of more than 3 days.
- Spoke placements are identified by practice.
- Spoke placements must be identified as part of the audit process of the hub placement (anything which is not identified as part of the hub audit must be agreed by the mentor, PEF and HEI. Spokes which are not agreed within the hub audit will be required to complete a risk assessment to be included within the hub audit file).
- Appropriate supervision must be available for students.
- Communication systems exist between the mentor in the hub and the qualified supervisor in the spoke.
- No formal summative assessment of practice is required but action plans or portfolio evidence must be completed by the student.

4.0 Allocation to Placement

4.1. Allocation to Hub Placement

- Allocation must be done jointly by the Placement Administrator / Allocation Officer and the appropriate placement personnel.
- Allocations will be displayed in the University only, 4 weeks in advance of the placement.
- Designated person within the hub placement / PEL will be informed of the hub allocation numbers.
- Students must be able to achieve the relevant NMC competencies within the allocated placement. The student will liaise with the spoke placements regarding timings and attendance and discuss them with their mentor.
- Hub placement is non-negotiable by student.
4.2. Allocation to Spoke Placement

- Allocation must be done by negotiation at local level, on the basis of local knowledge to maximise the learning experiences for students.

- Designated person within the hub placement / PEL / mentor must be informed of the spoke placement dates for individual students, either by the student themselves or by the appropriate placement personnel.

- Rotational spoke activity must be planned.

- Spoke placements must be appropriate to the hub and contribute to the student achieving the relevant NMC competencies. If a spoke experience is part of a planned learning experience then the spoke placement is non-negotiable by the student.

- All students may have the opportunity to attend spoke placements where these are available, following discussion with their mentor.

5.0 Assessment of Practice

5.1. Assessment of Practice in the Hub Placement

5.1.1. Practice Placement Assessment Documentation must be completed, at the appropriate times, within this area and this includes:

- Initial interview completed by mentor or registrant within 48 hours of commencement of placement.

- Learning competencies agreed via action plans and learning opportunities identified by mentor or registrant.

- Mid-point review of learning needs, achievements and opportunities by mentor or registrant.

- Final interview and judgement of achievements made by the mentor within the last week.

5.1.2. In preparation for spoke placements documentation should be completed, as appropriate, by the student and the qualified supervisor to identify learning needs for major spoke placements of more than 2 days in length and these must be reviewed following this experience.

5.2. Assessment of Practice in the Spoke Placement

5.2.1. No formal summative assessment of practice is required, however:

- Documentation should be completed, as appropriate, by the student and the qualified supervisor.

- Appropriate learning opportunities are to be identified to ensure that the learning needs are met whilst the student is in the spoke placement.
• Appropriate page in the Practice Placement Assessment Document is to be completed by the qualified supervisor prior to the student completing the spoke placement.

• Staff in the spoke placement must liaise with the mentor or registrant in the hub if there are any areas of concern or excellence in student performance.

6.0 Attendance, Sickness and Absence Reporting

• Students must contact the hub or spoke placement as appropriate and follow the University of Salford, Manchester Metropolitan University or The University of Manchester’s existing policy related to sickness and absence.

• Students must contact the hub or spoke placement if they are going to be either late or unable to attend in accordance with the University of Salford, Manchester Metropolitan University or The University of Manchester’s existing policy related to sickness and absence.

• Students who attend spoke placements of less than 1 full day must return to their hub placement to complete their full shift.

7.0 Securing, Approving, Allocating, Monitoring and Evaluating Hub and Spoke Placements

• All hub placements must be audited and supported by a University Link Lecturer.

• All spoke placements must be identified when the hub placement is being audited and must be included on the hub’s audit form.

• Follow the University of Salford, Manchester Metropolitan University or The University of Manchester’s policy related to securing, approving, allocating, monitoring and evaluating placements.

8.0 Student Support and Information in Hub and Spoke Placements

• Supernumerary status of students maintained at all times in any placement area.

• Supervised by appropriate individuals in any placement area.

• Up to date and accurate information relating to placement area is available on the Intranet.

• Range of practitioners / supervisors support the student as necessary in the placement area.
• All mentors / registrants in the hub placement are aware of the student curricular and learning needs and complete annual Mentor Educational Updates to maintain ‘Live Register’ status.

• Students to attend in-house teaching sessions arranged by the allocated placement area.

9.0 Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the three HEIs, students and placement providers relating to hub and spoke placements are as follows:

9.1. Placement Provider Responsibilities

• Provide hub and spoke practice placements which provide learning opportunities after the NHS North West have secured the practice placements via the PDM’s.

• Ensure that practice placement staff in hub placements are able to support, guide and assess students and document the student’s progress appropriately.

• Ensure that practice placement staff in spoke practice placements are able to support and guide students and document the student’s progress appropriately.

• Provide safe hub and spoke practice placements that reflect evidence based practice.

• Provide appropriate induction to the hub and spoke practice placement environment.

• Non NHS practice placement environments must have indemnity insurance cover in place and must have completed an appropriate risk assessment.

• Support staff development in relation to Mentor Educational Updates, Preparation for Mentorship modules, PEL roles, as applicable, so that the practice placement staff can provide a quality learning environment.

• Document, investigate and respond to any reasonable complaints regarding any hub and spoke practice placement and report findings to appropriate personnel by following the University of Salford, Manchester Metropolitan University or The University of Manchester’s existing guidelines.

9.2 Student Responsibilities

• Conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times reflecting the professional image of nursing and midwifery with respect to the NMC Code (2008) and their respective University policies.

• Manage and document their learning in relation to their personal and professional development whilst in the hub and spoke practice placement areas.
• Alert the placement provider and the HEI of any areas of concern with the hub and spoke practice placement which is affecting their progress and satisfactory completion of the placement by following the University of Salford, Manchester Metropolitan University or The University of Manchester’s existing guidelines.

• Ensure that they complete the relevant placement evaluation in a fair and constructive manner.

9.3 HEI responsibilities

• Approve, monitor and allocate hub practice placements.

• Ensure that all placement providers are aware of their responsibilities in providing hub and spoke practice placements, learning opportunities, assessment of students and health and safety issues.

• Provide academic and pastoral support to students in preparation for, during and after allocation to hub and spoke practice placements.

• Non NHS practice placement environments must have personal indemnity insurance cover in place and an appropriate risk assessment.

• Provide Mentor Educational Updates and Preparation for Mentorship modules to ensure that all practice placement staff are competent to fulfil their role in supporting, guiding and assessing students and to develop learning opportunities within the practice placement area.

• In collaboration, document, investigate and respond to any reasonable complaints regarding any hub and spoke practice placement and report findings to appropriate personnel.

• When all areas have been explored, remove any hub or spoke practice placement area from the practice circuit if problems warrant this as a short or long term measure. Action plans should be devised and implemented to rectify problems.
## 10.0 Glossary of Terms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor (Nursing and Midwifery)</td>
<td>A registrant who has successfully completed an NMC approved mentor preparation programme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sign Off Mentor (Nursing and Midwifery)</td>
<td>A Mentor who has met additional criteria and may sign off proficiency at the end of a final period of practice learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>North West Placement Development Network</td>
<td>A network to enhance the healthcare learning experience, delivering excellence, choice and breadth, beyond boundaries, to meet the needs of the future workforce.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Placement Development Manager (PDM)</td>
<td>Funded by NHS North West (the Placement Development Network is hosted and employed by NHS Bolton). They identify and develop new placements across a range of professionals in order to increase capacity and breadth of learning experiences. The PDM supports and advises the PEL to complete the audit document.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Placement Education Lead (PEL) / Student Link</td>
<td>A designated individual who facilitates the maintenance of quality learning environment and who is responsible for ensuring the audit document is completed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Placement Provider</td>
<td>NHS Trusts / Non NHS organisations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Education Facilitator (PEF)</td>
<td>A Trust employee whose role it is to facilitate learning in practice for all undergraduate healthcare students, with a particular focus on quality assurance and inter-professional learning, following a successful placement audit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>University Link Lecturer (ULL)</td>
<td>Academic Staff from an HEI who link to the practice placement area and are responsible for verifying the audit document.</td>
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### 11.0 Key Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hub Placement</th>
<th>Spoke Placement</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Elements which must be Adhered to</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Achievement of NMC competencies.</td>
<td>Provide a holistic view of care.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum of 4 weeks.</td>
<td>Maximum quarter of hub placement time. If less than a day then return to hub area to complete hours. No spokes in final module of Year 3 of 3 days or more.</td>
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<td>Appropriately qualified Mentor / Registrant</td>
<td>Qualified supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Allocation of Placements by Appropriate Personnel</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Allocated by Placement Administrator and appropriate placement personnel.</td>
<td>Negotiated at local level.</td>
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<td><strong>Assessment of Practice Completed Accurately</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Appropriate documentation completed by mentor.</td>
<td>Appropriate documentation completed by qualified supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sickness Reporting Process</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student to contact Hub and HEI if sick.</td>
<td>Student to contact Spoke and HEI if sick.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Securing, Approving, Allocating and Evaluating Placements</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Audited and supported by ULL</td>
<td>Included in hub audit documentation only.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student Support</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Supernumerary status at all times.</td>
<td>Supernumerary status at all times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervised by appropriately qualified Mentor / Registrant</td>
<td>Supervised by appropriately qualified supervisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor to attend Education updates annually.</td>
<td>Liaise with Mentor for information.</td>
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12.0 References

- Nursing and Midwifery Council (2010): *Standards for Pre-Registration Nursing Education*: NMC: London.

